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**Gravina Access Project Scoping Summary Report,  
December 1999**

*Public and agency issues summary, and selected agency correspondence.  
The full report is on file with ADOT&PF.*

# Gravina Access Project Scoping Summary Report

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State of Alaska  
Department of Transportation and  
Public Facilities  
6860 Glacier Highway  
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Prepared by:



HDR Alaska, Inc.  
712 West 12th Street  
Juneau, Alaska 99801

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# 1.0 Introduction

## 1.1 Scoping Overview

*Scope: (1) the range of one's actions or thoughts, (2) the space or opportunity to operate or function, (3) the extent of an activity, situation or function, (4) an instrument for observing*

Ask for a definition of the word "scope" and most people will respond with one of the four meanings listed above. For the Gravina Access Project, however, "scope" is also the root word of an important public involvement process called "scoping." The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF), on behalf of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), is pursuing alternatives for improving access between Revillagigedo Island and Gravina Island near Ketchikan in Southeast Alaska (see Figure 1). To ensure that the project fits the needs of area residents, the DOT&PF engaged in "scoping." The term scoping is the process through which project team members listen to ideas and concerns of people and agencies affected by the project and identify a range of alternatives and issues needing further study. Scoping ensures that alternatives and future studies associated with the project reflect the community's and agencies' input. The purpose of this "Scoping Summary Report" is to capture the results of the public and agency outreach (scoping) activities conducted during the initial phase of the Gravina Access Project.

Scoping is also the first stage in the development of a comprehensive environmental document that meets the statutory requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The FHWA will use this NEPA document as the basis for its decision to approve or not approve this project for design and construction. One of the purposes of scoping was to provide early notification of the project to the Ketchikan local governments, regulatory agencies, Alaska Native organizations, and the public. Early participation prevents misconceptions, curtails unnecessary delays to satisfy information requests, and fulfills the requirements of the NEPA process in a cost-effective manner. The scoping process identifies potential benefits, concerns, issues, and information sources related to the project as well as the need for special studies. Scoping is the means to solicit input from the public and agencies about the types of issues and the range of alternatives to include in the NEPA analysis.

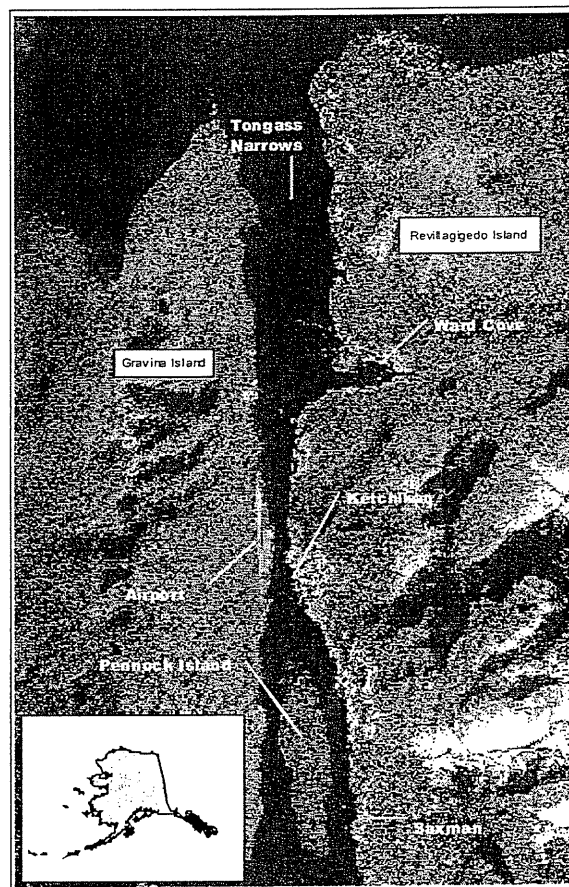


Figure 1. Project Vicinity





Another purpose of scoping is to help define the 'scope' of study required for the NEPA process and to focus preliminary engineering efforts.

The goals for the Gravina Access Project scoping process include:

- to identify potentially interested parties
- to inform them of the project and receive their input on issues of concern
- to establish the public record of this input.

This document is the public record of the scoping activities undertaken for the Gravina Access Project. Appendix A contains the project's scoping outreach materials, Appendix B contains agency scoping materials, and Appendix C contains public scoping materials. In particular Appendices B and C contain the public and agency comment received by the project team in various forms of communication before, during, and after the various events described below. Telephone conversations and meetings documented by the project team and all written correspondence are included.

## 1.2 Project Overview

The U. S. Congress has allocated Transportation Equity Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (TEA 21) funds for a special project specifically to improve transportation access from Ketchikan on Revillagigedo Island to Gravina Island. The intent of the congressional action is to provide access to Ketchikan International Airport on Gravina Island and to the island itself.

The Gravina Access Project will be conducted in three phases:

- 1) preparation of analysis and documents required by NEPA, that define issues of concern and environmental impacts of a range of alternatives
- 2) design of the preferred alternative\*
- 3) construction of the preferred alternative\*

The federal funding, with a required state match, supports all three phases of the Gravina Access Project. DOT&PF has selected HDR Alaska, Inc. as the consultant to assist the DOT&PF in the execution of all three phases of the Gravina Access Project.

## 2.0 Scoping Methodology

The methodology used during scoping on the Gravina Access Project is detailed in two separate documents: (1) the "Gravina Access Project Scoping Plan" and (2) the "Gravina Access Project Public Involvement Plan." The DOT&PF approved these documents in September 1999. Implementation of the plans over the past two months has been the primary focus of the Gravina Access Project team, comprised of DOT&PF and HDR personnel. The intent of the scoping and public involvement plans is to define a process for securing public and agency input about the types and range of issues to be

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\* Design and construction phases will only occur if the NEPA analysis results in FHWA approval of a build alternative.



addressed in the document to be prepared for compliance with NEPA. The Gravina Access Project must comply with NEPA because of the expenditure of federal funds.

The methodology used in scoping was completed under a number of specific tasks. These tasks are summarized below and are explained in detail in the scoping and public involvement plans.

- Task 1: Develop a scoping plan, submit to the DOT&PF, and incorporate DOT&PF comments.
- Task 2: Prepare an introductory letter.
- Task 3: Prepare and maintain a project mailing list.
- Task 4: Prepare "Notice of Intent to Conduct Environmental Scoping Activities"
- Task 5: Compose and mail a letter of invitation to the agency scoping meeting.
- Task 6: Prepare scoping meeting graphics.
- Task 7: Prepare for the agency scoping meeting.
- Task 8: Prepare for the public scoping meeting.
- Task 9: Conduct an agency scoping meeting in Juneau/Ketchikan.
- Task 10: Conduct a public scoping meeting in Ketchikan.
- Task 11: Prepare a scoping summary report.

The approach to public outreach during the Gravina Access Project scoping phase can simply be described as multifaceted. The public involvement plan (PIP) identifies potentially affected interests (PAIs) for the project. The PAIs include the general public in Ketchikan and the surrounding area, businesses, local governments, state agencies, federal agencies, Alaska Native organizations, and special interests. The full list of PAIs is provided in the PIP.

The scoping process for the Gravina Access Project employed a number of techniques designed to ensure that all PAIs, members of the public, and agencies were informed and involved throughout the project. Individual outreach and public meeting techniques were used in combination because they have proven to be effective and practical. The following list highlights these techniques.

- Informal local government and agency meetings
- A project mailing list
- A Ketchikan Project Office
- A newspaper insert
- A postcard mailer
- A project kiosk at the Plaza Mall
- Display advertisements in the *Ketchikan Daily News* and the *Juneau Empire*
- Public service announcements (PSAs) on local radio and television stations in Ketchikan
- A news article in the *Ketchikan Daily News*
- Local Ketchikan radio station interviews
- Informal flyers posted in local businesses
- A presentation on the project to the Ketchikan Chamber of Commerce
- A public meeting and various informal meetings in Ketchikan
- A project website ([www.gravina-access.com](http://www.gravina-access.com))



The "Gravina Access Project Public Involvement Plan" details the use of each of these techniques. These efforts directly supported the scoping process required under NEPA, which is described below.

### 3.0 NEPA Scoping Activities

The DOT&PF and HDR Alaska project team conducted the scoping activities summarized in the following narrative. Particular emphasis has been placed on two major events—the agency scoping meeting held in Juneau and the public scoping meeting held in Ketchikan. These meetings are traditionally held during project scoping to provide the public and agencies a formal opportunity to learn about the project and provide comments directly to the project team. Scoping activities conducted prior to and after these meetings are also summarized.

#### 3.1 Early Scoping Activities

On February 22, 1999, the FHWA, in cooperation with DOT&PF, published in the Federal Register a Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed Gravina Access Project. The notice stated:

*The proposed action would improve access to the Ketchikan International Airport and developable lands on Gravina Island. Alternatives under consideration include taking no action, various bridge alternatives, and an underwater tunnel. Several crossing alignments are under consideration.*

This notification serves as the formal initiation of project activities under NEPA and constitutes the first public and agency notification of the project.

Project outreach activities for the Gravina Access Project began in Ketchikan on August 11 with the DOT&PF and HDR project team presenting an overview of the project to the Ketchikan Chamber of Commerce. The presentation was prepared in Microsoft PowerPoint and incorporated animation that allowed the audience to "fly over" the project area and see simulations of crossing concepts.

During the August visit to Ketchikan, the project team conducted informal meetings with agencies such as the Ketchikan Gateway Borough, the City of Ketchikan, the U.S. Forest Service, and the U.S. Coast Guard to begin identifying agency-specific issues and concerns regarding the project.

The Project Team developed a brief analysis of the revised regulations issued in May 1999, implementing Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. This analysis points out the need for early and consistent consultation with Native groups and other interested parties. A copy of this analysis is included in Appendix B.

Alaska Native organizations are included on the project mailing list and received invitations to agency and public meetings and project materials.



A newspaper insert in the *Ketchikan Daily News* on September 25, 1999, which reached the paper's circulation of approximately 5,700, initiated the public scoping process. A postcard mailer was sent to all Ketchikan area residents on September 29, 1999, advertising the public scoping meeting to be held on October 6, 1999. Public comments on the project were solicited.

A letter introducing the Gravina Access Project and invitation to the agency scoping meeting was sent to the Native organizations, and local, state, and federal agencies on September 3, 1999. On September 17, 1999, additional materials were mailed to the agencies and Native organizations to prepare them for the agency scoping meeting. The materials included the newspaper insert published in the *Ketchikan Daily News*, a summary of relevant issues from the previous studies, a bibliography of studies and reports generated from prior work on crossing alternatives, and a draft flyer on the public scoping meeting in Ketchikan on October 6, 1999. Follow-up phone calls were made to invitees a week prior to the meeting.

### 3.2 Agency Scoping Meeting

The agency scoping meeting was held on Monday, September 27, 1999, at the Hickel Room in Centennial Hall in Juneau. To provide access to others not present in Juneau, a teleconference link was provided to Ketchikan, Anchorage, and Sitka. The agency scoping meeting began with an overview of the Gravina Access Project by HDR team members. The concurrent planning effort of the Ketchikan Gateway Borough (Ketchikan 2020) was presented to enable the agencies to understand how those efforts relate to the Gravina Access Project. The presentation was followed by an agency-by-agency discussion of specific issues.

The following agencies and project team members were in attendance:

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#### In Juneau:

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##### Federal Agencies:

- *US Coast Guard*: Jim Helfinstine
- *FHWA*: Jim Bryson
- *US Army Corps of Engineers*: Steve Duncan, John Leeds
- *National Marine Fisheries Service*: Linda Shaw
- *U.S. Forest Service, Region 10*: Ken Vaughan

##### State Agencies:

- *Dept of Environmental Conservation*: Carl Schrader
- *Dept of Natural Resources*: Jim Anderson
- *DOT&PF*: Bill Ballard
- *Div. of Governmental Coordination*: Jennifer Garland

##### Project Team:

- *DOT&PF*: Al Steininger, Reuben Yost
  - *HDR Alaska, Inc.*: Eric Keen, Larry Kyle, Mark Dalton, John McPherson, Darcy Richards
  - *Brooks & Associates*: Anne Brooks
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**In Ketchikan:**

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**Federal Agencies:**

- *U.S. Forest Service:* Susan Marthaller, Jack Oien

**State Agencies:**

- *Dept. of Fish and Game:* Jack Gustafson

**Local Government:**

- *Ketchikan Gateway Borough:* Susan Dickinson; John Hill; Jonathan Lappin; Aneta Synan

**Native Organizations:**

- *Cape Fox Corporation:* Bud Johnson

**Project Team:**

- *Klugherz & Associates:* Mary Klugherz
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**In Anchorage:**

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**Federal Agencies:**

- *Federal Aviation Administration:* Jim Lomen; Clarence Goward

**Project Team:**

- *HDR Alaska, Inc.:* Carla SlatonBarker; Robin Reich
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**In Sitka:**

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- *Ketchikan Gateway Borough:* Mayor Jack Shay
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Appendix B includes the transcript of the agency scoping meeting, which was prepared by a court reporter.

### 3.3 Public Scoping Meeting

The Gravina Access Project is one of several projects currently underway in Ketchikan. The Borough has initiated a comprehensive planning process for Gravina Island, is pursuing an update to its coastal management plan, and is also conducting wetlands planning. These planning efforts comprise the Borough's "Ketchikan 2020" planning program. The U.S. Forest Service is engaged in a timber sale environmental impact statement for its lands on west Gravina Island. The Alaska Mental Health Trust has lands on Gravina Island that it would like to see developed to achieve its objective of realizing income from its land base to support state mental health programs. The DOT&PF and HDR Alaska project team determined that sharing information, cooperating on data collection efforts, and agreeing to communicate often as the different projects are implemented would benefit these and other planning efforts in the Ketchikan area. .

To this end the public scoping meeting was broadened to a "planning fair" format. Multiple local, state and federal agencies were invited to Ketchikan to set up a booth at the Ted Ferry Civic Center to enable the public to engage the different agencies about their respective planning efforts and learn how the efforts related to the Gravina Access Project. The "planning fair" concept was presented to the local, state, and federal agencies as a suggested means to facilitate the scoping process. Agency support for the concept was strong.



Notification of the public scoping meeting and planning fair consisted of the tabloid-sized insert in the *Ketchikan Daily News* on Saturday, September 25, 1999. Additional copies of the insert were obtained to use in follow-up outreach efforts. These were made available to the agencies at the agency scoping meeting and the general public through the Gravina Access Project Ketchikan project office and the Ketchikan Gateway Borough, Planning Department Office. Each Ketchikan resident with a current mailing address received a postcard mailer with notification of the public meeting, and businesses throughout Ketchikan received flyers for public display. Both the postcard and flyer contained the public meeting specifics—date, time, and format.

The public scoping meeting was held in the Ted Ferry Civil Center on October 6, 1999. The public scoping meeting was conducted in an open house format. The doors opened at 3:00 p.m. and closed at 8:30 p.m. The public was invited to stop by at any time during this time frame. The DOT&PF and HDR project team was present to discuss the project with the public. Approximately 110 members of the community signed in at the meeting. A formal presentation was held at 6:00 p.m. During this presentation members of the HDR team provided a project overview and each agency in attendance provided short briefings on their projects or their function. A question-and-answer dialog with the public followed the presentations. The public asked questions of DOT&PF, HDR Alaska, and the Ketchikan Gateway Borough. The project team had several note takers available during the meeting and a full summary of the meeting is included as Appendix C. All handout materials provided to the public regarding the Gravina Access Project at this meeting are included in this document. Also, comment sheets were developed for the project and the public was encouraged to provide the project team written comment. All written comment is included in Appendix C.

The following agencies with current planning efforts underway in Ketchikan participated.

- Ketchikan Gateway Borough for the Ketchikan 2020 comprehensive plan
- USKH for DOT&PF's Ketchikan International airport master plan
- U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service for the West Gravina Island proposed timber sale
- U.S. Coast Guard for navigation oversight in Tongass Narrows
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for waters and wetlands planning
- State of Alaska, Division of Governmental Coordination for coastal management planning
- Alaska Mental Health Trust Land Office for trust resources asset planning
- Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry for the five-year schedule of timber sales
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for wetland and watershed planning

### 3.4 Post Scoping Meeting Activities

Public outreach continued on October 7 with local Ketchikan radio interviews with KRBD-FM and KTKN-AM. Project team leaders answered questions about the project—its scope, schedule, funding, and public outreach efforts. The interviewers also wanted a summary of the public comment received at the planning fair. To further encourage public comments, the



*Ketchikan Daily News* published an editorial on October 12, 1999, emphasizing the need for the public to provide input in the scoping phase of the project. The newspaper also published the project comment sheet as a newspaper insert in the October 13, 1999 paper. The combined outreach has resulted in over 70 written comments from the public.

Also on October 7, DOT&PF and HDR project team members met with the agency participants to discuss the relationship of their efforts to the Gravina Access Project, discuss what was heard from the public, and plan future project coordination efforts. A summary of this debriefing is included in Appendix C. The DOT&PF and HDR project team emphasized the importance of the agency input and participation throughout the project and discussed the formation of a project development team (PDT) consisting of agency personnel, project team members, and local government representatives. The PDT meetings will be a forum to present and discuss project study plans, study findings, upcoming field and office work, coordination points, and general project development. The first PDT meeting was held November 4, 1999 in Ketchikan with teleconference links to Anchorage, Juneau, and Seattle. This group will meet regularly throughout project development.

## 4.0 Summary of Input Received

### 4.1 Verbal Comments Received at Agency Scoping Meeting September 27, 1999

A written transcript of the agency scoping meeting is located in Appendix B. The following is a summary of comments offered by each agency at the meeting.

#### 4.1.1 Federal Agencies

##### *US Army Corps of Engineers (COE)*

1. The COE asked how the project will impact expansion plans at the Ketchikan International Airport.
2. The COE expressed concern about cumulative and secondary impacts and whether the proposed road system will be addressed as part of the project.
3. The COE will want to see information on bathymetry, wind and current patterns, structure geology, and how land and water will be affected on both sides of the Narrows.

##### *Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)*

1. FAA's Flight Standards Division will be involved in project review because the Tongass Narrows Corridor is a heavily used flight corridor. Concerns centered around the project impact on Ketchikan International Airport

##### *National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)*

1. NMFS expressed concern about the relationship between the Gravina Access Project and Ketchikan 2020. NMFS asked about the role agencies will have in the Ketchikan 2020 planning process.
2. Adherence to essential fish habitat requirements contained in the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act will be required.



3. Depending on the alternatives, noise impacts to marine mammals may be a concern. NMFS could potentially help with studies if needed.

#### *U.S. Coast Guard (USCG)*

1. A permit from Coast Guard will be required for a hard link
2. The USCG expressed concern about vertical and horizontal openings for a bridge.
3. The USCG expressed concern that combining plans may be confusing and unwieldy.

#### *U. S. Forest Service (USFS)*

1. The USFS expressed concern that the complexity of the project when viewed in relationship with other planning efforts, Ketchikan 2020 in particular, may be confusing to the public.
2. The Ketchikan Ranger District is conducting a timber sale environmental impact statement (EIS) on Gravina. The Gravina Access Project could provide access to Forest Service lands if additional access roads are built.

### **4.1.2 State Agencies**

#### *Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC)*

1. DEC expressed concern that proper environmental safeguards be in place to protect aquatic resources such as streams, lakes, and shoreline on Gravina Island.

#### *Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G)*

1. The area biologist had previously met with the project team about fish and wildlife resources and habitat issues. Meeting notes are presented in Appendix B.

#### *Department of Natural Resources – Division of Mining, Land and Water (DNR)*

1. Their involvement will occur once alternatives are developed.

#### *Division of Governmental Coordination (DGC)*

1. DGC asked how the Lewis Reef industrial development project will fit into this project.
2. DGC requested that the project team keep agencies informed about the relationship between the Gravina Access Project and Ketchikan 2020.
3. DGC involvement will be limited until permit applications are made.

### **4.1.3 Local Agencies**

#### *Ketchikan Gateway Borough (KGB)*

1. The Borough is not advocating for any particular crossing.
2. Land ownership on Gravina is more defined now that Mental Health Trust Land status is resolved.





## 4.2 Summary of Written Agency Comments Received

The agency comment period deadline was initially October 13, 1999, but this deadline was later extended until October 27, 1999 at agency request. The following is a summary of each agency's comments. Copies of the comment letters appear in Appendix B.

### 4.2.1 Federal Agencies

#### *Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)*

1. A bridge has the potential to significantly impact navigable airspace.
2. The Revilla Corridor (from East Island to Pennock Island at or below 400 feet msl) is heavily used for floatplane and other operators flying under visual flight rules.
3. With enhanced technology and pilot training current approach minima could be lowered in the future but a bridge, depending on its location, may interfere with that.

#### *National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)*

1. NMFS expressed concern about impacts to marine resources including anadromous fish, marine fish, and invertebrates and marine mammals.
2. NMFS favors alternatives and designs that minimize direct, indirect and cumulative impacts.
3. NMFS provided a summary of specific resource issues.
4. Additional studies might be necessary to determine impacts of noise to marine mammals and juvenile salmonids and spawning herring.
5. It may be necessary to satisfy consultation requirements of the Endangered Species Act.
6. Essential fish habitat (EFH) requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act should be addressed in NEPA document.

#### *U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Regulatory Branch (COE)*

1. The COE suggested that there will likely be a need for Section 10 and Section 404 permits.
2. Compensatory mitigation should be considered early in project planning.
3. Further information needs identified:
  - jurisdictional wetlands determinations
  - identification of direct and indirect impacts from airport expansion, new roads, industrial, residential and other development
  - bathymetry, currents, wind and weather patterns for each crossing alternative; information concerning aquatic and other natural resources
  - dive surveys for alternatives under consideration
  - tidal data
4. Other issues needing to be addressed include:
  - long term maintenance
  - storm water
  - purpose and need for the project
  - public support for the project
  - identification of "appropriate" commercial/industrial development on Gravina
5. The COE reiterated that the permit process will evaluate all practicable alternatives.



*U.S. Coast Guard (USCG)*

1. The USCG requested that the draft NEPA document include a separate section on navigational impacts.
2. The USCG provided navigation data prepared by the Marine Safety Detachment in Ketchikan.

*U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)*

1. Purpose and need statement should be concise, easily understandable, and consistent with NEPA with supporting pertinent background information presented in separate section.
2. The NEPA document should describe fully the various planning efforts being undertaken with the Gravina Access Project and their relationship to the access project.
3. The project should analyze the potential indirect and cumulative environmental impacts associated with the access project itself and those associated with subsequent development on Gravina, (and potentially Pennock and Revilla Islands).
4. The project should include identification of wetlands types, acreage, and locations, and an assessment of wetland functions and values.
5. Freshwater sources should be evaluated for availability/type and quantity.
6. Effects of development on the hydrologic systems on Gravina and their relationships to water quality and fish habitat should be evaluated.
7. Analysis of impacts to water quality and fish habitat from storm water, wastewater and sewage associated with development should be evaluated.
8. The project should clarify that funding is secure only for the environmental process and design.

*U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)*

1. USFWS expressed concern about cumulative and secondary impacts to fish and wildlife resources and habitats.
2. Development should be directed away from the most productive and sensitive habitats.
3. Roads should be sited away from the shoreline and obvious beach fringe areas.
4. USFWS, with its dive program, can assist with siting of marine facilities.

*U.S. Forest Service – Ketchikan Ranger District (USFS)*

1. The USFS asked how a hard link would tie into the Forest Service road system.
2. The USFS asked how the road system would be affected by increased public access to Gravina.
3. The USFS asked if there was a need for development of recreational sites and trails based on increased access.
4. The USFS wants to ensure that its plans for federal lands are compatible with other Gravina landowners.

**4.2.2 State Agencies***Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G)*

1. Effects of the project on fish and wildlife species, their habitats, and the public uses of fish and wildlife should be considered.



2. The project should consider both direct impacts and secondary and cumulative effects.
3. Field surveys should be conducted for wetlands, uplands, intertidal and sub-tidal habitats and sensitive species of plants, animals or habitats; esp. Alaska worm salamander.
4. The NEPA document should provide an analysis of the cumulative effects of linking Ketchikan to an interconnected road system accessing most of Gravina Island.
5. Methods to avoid impacts should be sought, mitigation described and evaluated, and monitoring developed and implemented to ensure the project is properly constructed and provides measures necessary for the protection of water quality and fish and wildlife resources and habitats.

*Department of Natural Resources – Alaska Mental Health Trust Land Office (AMHT)*

1. The Trust supports a hard link that accesses not only the airport but also Ketchikan Gateway Borough lands and Trust lands beyond the airport.
2. Development of infrastructure on Gravina would enhance undeveloped Trust lands.

*Department of Natural Resources – Office of History and Archeology (DNR)*

1. Historic/cultural sites (Native burial sites) occur on Pennock Island.
2. Construction in this area would not be well received by local Native residents.
3. Native entities that should be contacted include the IRA Councils (Ketchikan Indian Corporation and the Organized Village of Saxman (IRA Council) and Cape Fox Corporation.

#### **4.2.3 Local Government**

*Ketchikan Gateway Borough (KGB)*

1. Concurrent comprehensive planning effort requires close coordination with the Gravina Access Project.
2. Information needs:
  - an updated land use inventory for Gravina and Revillagigedo Islands,
  - updated Borough-wide base maps,
  - a system for data retrieval, maintenance and analysis of mapped information,
  - and a contemporary set of scalable, digital aerial photography compatible with the digital mapping system.

#### **4.3 Verbal Comments Received at the Public Meeting October 6, 1999**

The public scoping meeting was held in the Ted Ferry Civil Center on October 6, 1999. Approximately 110 community participants signed in at the meeting. A formal presentation was held at 6:00 p.m. and was followed by a question-and-answer dialog with the public. The project team had several note takers available during the meeting and a full summary of the meeting included in Appendix C. The following is a summary, by topic, of the verbal questions, comments, and concerns expressed by the public at the meeting.

**Community Support** – DOT&PF should consider ending the project if there is not sufficient community support.



**Comprehensive Planning** – How long do we have to plan before doing something? When will the Borough comprehensive plan for Gravina Island be done? If the access project isn't built, will there still be a "Gravina Island Comprehensive Plan"?

**Cost/Benefit** – Is cost/benefit analysis a marker for whether or not an improvement is built? A previous cost/benefit analysis was done between and bridge and ferry; why do another?

**Economic Development** - Economic development should be a stated need for the project. A land use inventory of Revilla and Gravina is needed to identify land suitable and not suitable for development. Constraints to development, such as wetlands, anadromous streams, sensitive habitats should be identified. Lack of developable land and expense of developable land are major constraints to economic development in Ketchikan. The potential of further developing Revilla versus the potential of development on Gravina should be assessed.

**Development of Gravina** – Does development of Gravina have to stop until this project and Borough planning projects are completed? What percentage of Gravina will actually be developable? Wouldn't it be better to develop roads on Gravina first before planning hard link access? Will the project also include access not only to the airport but to Gravina lands as well? Road access will foster development opportunities. A road corridor should be identified and developed without waiting for the access project to be completed. Will regulatory agencies permit a road on Gravina?

**Funding** - Where is the money for the project coming from? Will the community be asked to pay for a portion of the project?

**Infrastructure Impacts of Project** – Will consideration be given to the increase in demand for power and water that the project will generate? Will impacts on parking and access roads to the airport be considered?

**Land Use Planning** – Some assumptions about how land will be developed on Gravina should precede location of a hard link. Without land use decisions made first, forecasting of vehicle traffic volume to Gravina may be inaccurate, too low, or too high. Will the public get to review the assumptions about land use and traffic generation before the studies are completed?

**Other Community Needs** – The community has other important needs, such as recreational land. By doing this project, will the community lose out on funding for other important projects?

**Pennock/Gravina Crossing** – Previously proposed crossing alternative involving Pennock Island was opposed by residents of Pennock because of perceived impacts to their lifestyle.

**Previous Studies** – How will previous studies by DOT&PF on the Tongass Narrows crossing be used?

**Purpose and Need for Project** – If safety wasn't an adequate foundation for the purpose and need of the project, why would development on Gravina be a enough for a purpose and need?



**Wetlands** - What kind of criteria will be used to make wetlands developable? Has there been a wetland classification on Gravina?

#### 4.4 Public Comments Received

##### 4.4.1 Comments and Concerns

Comment sheets were provided to the public at the public scoping meeting in Ketchikan and at the Ketchikan project office. A comment sheet was also included as an insert in the October 13, 1999, edition of the *Ketchikan Daily News*. Public comments were submitted by mail or sent via e-mail. Approximately 75 written comments were received between the period of October 6 and November 10, 1999. Tables 4-1 and 4-2 present a summary of the written questions, comments, and concerns expressed by the public. The comments have been presented in matrix format for easy reference.

**Table 4-1 Issues Submitted**

Issue	Issue Description	Suggested Action (if any)	Opposition to Suggested Action
Airspace	Bridge would interfere with floatplane traffic	Relocate floatplanes across Narrows; Build bridge at Pennock Island	
Burial Grounds	Native burial grounds on Pennock could be disturbed by bridge construction	Don't build bridge in burial grounds area	
Comprehensive Planning	Need long-range planning for Gravina before access is built; do planning after bridge is built; the Borough should finish what has been started	(Note: This project will be coordinated with the Borough's Ketchikan 2020 planning efforts)	No more planning, just build the bridge
Cost/Benefit of Project	Project will benefit only a few	Evaluate project on basis of whole community	
Fish, Wildlife, and Habitat Resources	Sensitive shoreline and intertidal habitat on Gravina should be protected; disturbed sensitive areas should be restored; endangered species should be protected	Protection of East Clump, Government Cr., Clam Cove, Lewis Reef, Blank Inlet, Black Sand Cove, Restoration of East Clump, Clam Cove	
Improved Access to Airport	Need improved access to airport for medical emergencies and convenience for travelers and those dropping off or picking up passengers	Build a hard link	Existing access is adequate; Travel time won't be reduced by bridge or tunnel
Job Creation	Local labor could be used in construction; development of Gravina would create jobs		
Landfill	Solid waste is barged south	Locate regional landfill on Gravina	Gravina isn't place for landfill
Maintenance	Bridge and tunnel would require maintenance	Choose option with least maintenance cost	Have difficulty maintaining what exists now; the community shouldn't be burdened with taxes to pay for maintenance



Issue	Issue Description	Suggested Action (if any)	Opposition to Suggested Action
Navigation	Bridge should be tall enough for cruise ships; Tongass Narrows is congested with air and marine traffic	Build bridge to accommodate cruise ships; Congestion should be considered in design of alternatives; Restrict traffic in west channel to cruise ships and east channel to state ferries and private craft	Cruise ships can go around Gravina; Tall bridge is too expensive
Other Community Needs	Money could be used for other things needed by the community	Improvements to Tongass Avenue, city streets, road maintenance, schools; Clean up of Ward Cove property for reuse	
Opening Land on Gravina	Hard link access would open Gravina land to various uses	Recreation land, golf course, residential property including Vallenar Valley, commercial/industrial development	No need to develop Gravina; Develop Revilla; Would destabilize property values; Lack of land on Gravina not reason why businesses aren't relocating to Ketchikan
Roads on Gravina	Roads would provide access to Gravina lands	Build roads to Lewis Reef development; build access roads to future commercial/industrial sites; build road to Vallenar Bay; build road along shoreline to open up areas for development	Don't develop Gravina, put roads on Revilla
Traffic Impacts	Traffic congestion problems on Revilla	Hard link would alleviate traffic flow problems; Improve road system and parking at airport	
Viewshed	Bridge would be an eyesore; Development on Gravina would be ugly	Build a tube or tunnel; Consider underground powerlines with road projects	
Water Quality	Declining water quality would be adversely impacted by development on Gravina	Protect beach fringe on Gravina	
Wetlands	Wetlands would be disturbed or destroyed by development on Gravina	Wetlands should be protected	Most of Alaska is wetlands; Build hard link and access roads for development

#### 4.4.2 Alternatives Suggested by the Public

The comment sheet included a map for identification of crossing alternatives and locations. The following discussion, Table 4-2, and Figure 2 summarizes the access alternatives suggested by the public.

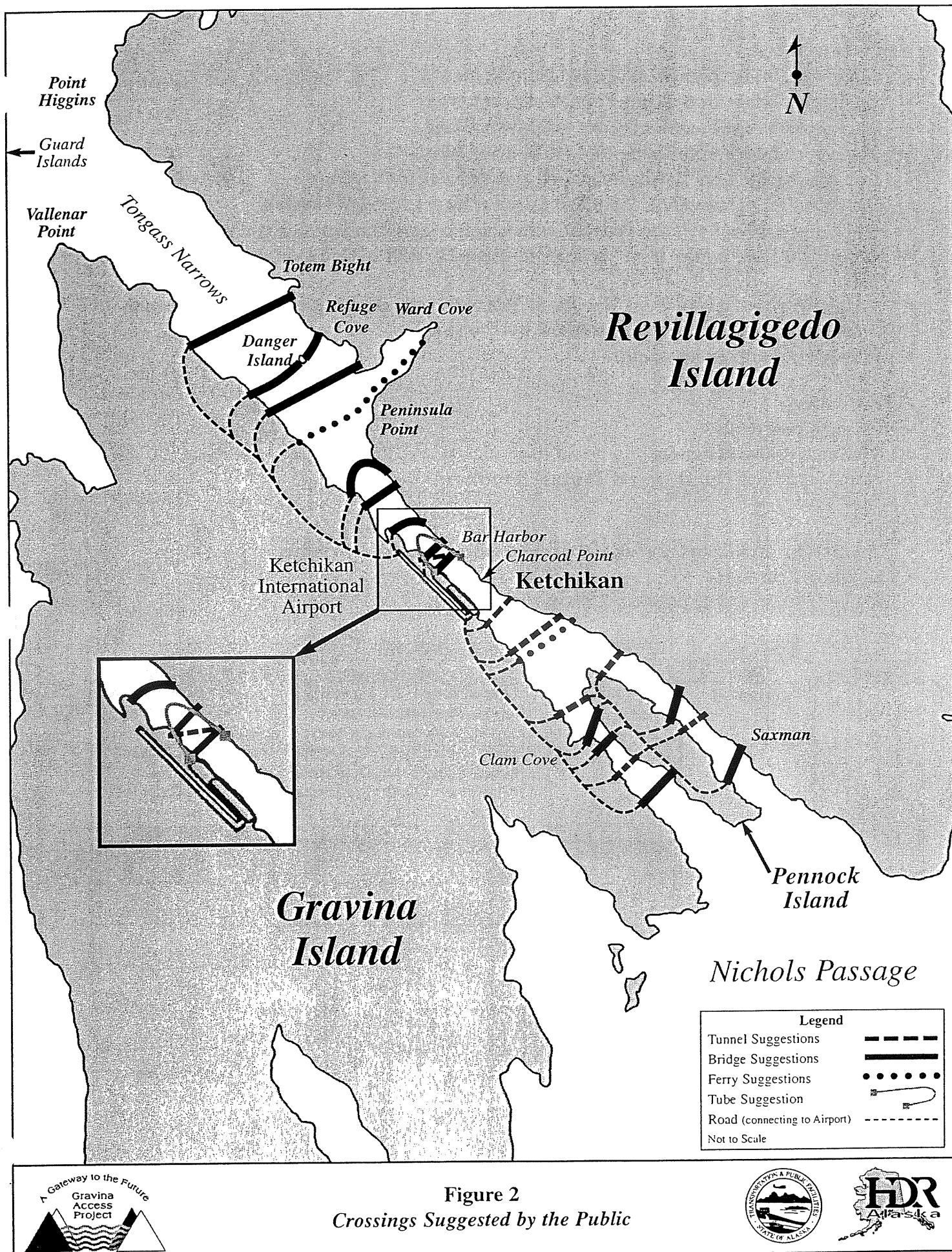
##### *Tunnel*

- At narrowest point in Tongass Narrows near the airport.

##### *Tube*

- A U-shaped tube north of the airport.







*Bridge Locations*

- Single-span bridge from Wolfe Point to airport runway.
- Single-span bridge from Sunny Point to airport runway.
- Single-span bridge from Ward Cove to Gravina Island.
- Single-span bridge from Totem Bight to Gravina Island.
- Two-span bridge from Revilla to midpoint on Pennock to Gravina.
- Two-span bridge from north of Refuge Cove to Danger Island to Gravina.
- A low bridge from Revilla to Pennock with a high bridge from Pennock to Gravina.
- A causeway/low bridge from Saxman to Pennock with a high bridge from Pennock to Gravina.
- A causeway/low bridge from Revilla to Pennock with a higher bridge from Pennock to Gravina that would allow state ferries but not cruise ships.
- Drawbridge north of the airport.

*Ferry Locations*

- Existing ferry route.
- Southeast of airport runway.
- From Ward Cove directly across Tongass Narrows to Gravina.

*Other*

- Tunnel from Revilla to Pennock and a bridge from Pennock to Gravina.
- Self propelled barge.
- Nuclear aircraft carrier positioned between the islands.

**Table 4-2 Suggested Alternatives**

Alternative	Type	Suggested Location	Reason for support	Reasons for Opposition
Bridge	Single span	Sunny Point to airport	General reasons for supporting a bridge: Most efficient access option; More convenient than ferry; Less expensive than tunnel; Minimal environmental impacts; Alleviates traffic flow problems.	Too expensive; Eyesore; Interferes with air and marine traffic; Would have to be too high to accommodate cruise ships; Would require constant maintenance; Who will maintain it?
	Single span	Wolfe Point to airport		
	Single span	Revilla to north of airport		
	Single span	Ward Cove to Gravina		
	Single span	Totem Bight to Gravina		
	U shaped	Wolfe Point to airport		
	Drawbridge	None specified		





Alternative	Type	Suggested Location	Reason for support	Reasons for Opposition
Bridge (cont.)	Two span	Revilla to mid Pennock to Gravina	Two span - alleviates air traffic interference	Pennock bridge would disrupt lifestyle and potentially destroy Native burial grounds
	Two span	North of Refuge Cove to Danger Island to Gravina		
	Causeway/bridge	Revilla to south Pennock to Gravina	Causeway/bridge would create breakway/harbor at Saxman/Pennock	
Existing Ferry Service			Existing service is adequate; Opposition to hard link; Opposition to enabling access to Gravina; Other alternatives don't solve community's problems; Cost of build alternatives is too high	Inconvenient; Inhibits access to Gravina
Improved Ferry Service	Large ferry, More frequent ferries	Present location; Ward Cove directly across to Gravina; Landing southeast of airport	Increased service may be most cost effective; Improve ramp; Improve existing service; Provide access to Gravina with improved ferry service	Inconvenient; Inhibits access to Gravina
Tube	U-shaped	Wolfe Point to airport near seaplane base	Low environmental impact; Lack of hazards to aircraft and vessels; Unspoiled view	
Tunnel		At narrowest span between islands	Low environmental impact; Lack of hazards to aircraft and vessels; Unspoiled view; Not weather ravaged; Most cost effective in long term; Lower maintenance cost than bridge	High cost of construction and maintenance; Steep approach with potential for traffic blockage
Other	Tunnel/bridge	Tunnel from Revilla to Pennock, bridge to Gravina	Alleviates aircraft interference	
	Self propelled barge		Not enough roads on Gravina to support a bridge	
	Nuclear aircraft carrier	Positioned between Revilla and Gravina	Provides access and power for SE Alaska	

#### 4.5 Identified Information Needs

The resource agencies, local government and Native organizations were asked to identify information gaps, fieldwork and special studies that would be helpful in preparation of the environmental document.

Table 4-3 presents responses received from local, state and federal agencies on information they would like to see as part of the project.



Table 4-3 Agency Responses

Agency	Biological Environment	Physical Environment	Social Environment
National Marine Fisheries Service	Noise impacts on marine mammals, juvenile salmonids, and spawning herring		
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	jurisdictional wetlands determination, information concerning aquatic and other natural resources, dive surveys	Bathymetry, currents, winds and weather patterns for each alternative, tidal data	Identification of direct and indirect impacts from airport expansion, new roads, industrial, residential development;
U.S. Coast Guard		Navigation impacts	Navigation impacts
U.S. EPA	Identification of wetland types, acreage, and locations; assessment of wetlands function and values; evaluation of freshwater sources for availability/type and quantity to support development on Gravina and impacts to water quality and fish habitat	Impacts to hydrologic systems on Gravina and their relationship to water quality and fish habitat	Analysis of potential indirect and cumulative impacts associated with development on Gravina, Pennock and Revilla Islands
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Concern about cumulative and secondary impacts to fish/wildlife resources and habitats.		
Ketchikan Gateway Borough			Updated land use inventory for Revilla and Gravina; updated Borough-wide base maps; system for data retrieval; digital aerial photography compatible with digital mapping system



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GRAVINA ACCESS PROJECT  
AGENCY SCOPING MEETING  
SEPTEMBER 27, 1999

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[On Record]

MR. DALTON: Everybody has a copy of the agenda and I'm going to turn it over -- this is Mark Dalton speaking with HDR Alaska, and I'm going to turn it over to the DOT Project Manager for the Gravina Access Project, Al Steininger.

MR. STEININGER: Hello. I want to welcome everybody here. This is the agency scoping for the Gravina Access Project. It's called a high priority project; it was a Congressional Legislation, T21 and it was titled The Bridge project, a bridge, but it's -- we're titled the access project because it's near the EIS that we'll be looking at all alternatives, and this is essentially the first meeting -- public meeting we have. And what I'd like to do is have introductions around the table. This is Anne Brooks, she's with Brooks and Associates, she's in charge of the public involvement.

MR. MCPHERSON: My name's John McPherson, I'm a planner with HDR.

MR. STEININGER: Excuse me. I want to back up a little bit too because we went through a process of selecting a consulting firm to do the EIS and the design and then follow up with construction management so it's a total project and we selected this company here, HDR Alaska Inc.,

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1 and so I'd like to start the introductions again, sorry.  
2 MR. MCPHERSON: So this is Anne.  
3 MR. STEININGER: Yeah.  
4 MS. BROOKS: I'm Anne.  
5 MR. MCPHERSON: And I'm John McPherson.  
6 MR. STEININGER: And -- and should we do ...  
7 MR. DALTON: Just wanted -- what we're going  
8 to do is introduce the project team, and then we'll introduce  
9 the other guests.  
10 MS. RICHARDS: I'm Darcy Richards.  
11 MR. KYLE: Larry Kyle.  
12 MR. KEEN: I'm Eric Keen with HDR and the  
13 program manager for the project.  
14 MR. DALTON: And again, I'm Mark Dalton, and I  
15 am the project manager for the first stage of the project,  
16 which is the NEPA analysis portion of the project.  
17 MR. STEININGER: And Carla, do you want to  
18 introduce yourself in Anchorage?  
19 MS. SLATONBARKER: Hi, I'm Carla SlatonBarker,  
20 I'm in the Anchorage office, and I'm a planner here.  
21 MR. DALTON: Okay. And Robin.  
22 MR. STEININGER: Robin.  
23 MS. REICH: This is Robin Reich, I'm an  
24 Environment Planner here in Anchorage.  
25 MR. DALTON: Okay. And Mary.

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1 MS. KLUGHERZ: This is Mary Klugherz in  
2 Ketchikan and I am at the Gravina Access Project Office here  
3 in Ketchikan.  
4 MR. KEEN: Okay. I thank you. Al, if you  
5 don't ...  
6 MR. STEININGER: Go ahead.  
7 MR. KEEN: ... mind, I'll start it. The  
8 purpose of today's meeting is to initiate the formal scoping  
9 process for the NEPA Environmental Protection Act to present  
10 to you Gravina Access Project. Today what we want to do is  
11 for you to discuss your agency's concern and to identify any  
12 of the significant issues that need to be addressed in the  
13 environmental document. As Al had mentioned, we were selected  
14 in July of this year, HDR, to conduct the first stage of the  
15 project we call the Environmental Phase where it's to develop  
16 the environmental document of this project. We are  
17 anticipating that it will be an environmental impact statement  
18 and supporting the HDR team are a number of specialty  
19 subconsultants of which you've been introduced to a few of  
20 them here this afternoon. One is Brooks and Associates and  
21 Anne Brooks is here supporting us on the agency and public  
22 involvement aspect of the project. Mary Klugherz in  
23 Ketchikan, Klugherz and Associates to support us on the public  
24 information and some of the environmental studies. We also  
25 have some -- team of nationally -- worldly recognized

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1 engineering firms. One is T.Y. Lin International that will be  
2 supporting HDR in the development of any of the bridge  
3 alternatives that we will talk about later on today. Hatch,  
4 Mott, McDonald, that is a international tunneling firm that  
5 will be supporting us for any of the tunneling alternatives.  
6 Shannon and Wilson is a geotechnical firm here in the United  
7 States and very prominent in Alaska that will be supporting us  
8 on the geotechnical aspects of the project and there are a  
9 number of other specialty firms, Northern Economics, Glosten  
10 and Associates for the ferry alternative. Bruce Hutchison is  
11 very familiar with many of the marine issues here in Alaska.  
12 He will be supporting us and looking at some of the ferry  
13 alternatives and a number of other firms, so it's quite a  
14 large group. We've really assembled a team of recognized  
15 experts in all the different areas. If we could maybe go  
16 around and have the agencies now introduce themselves. Mayor.  
17 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Somebody needs to close  
18 their window.

19 MR. DALTON: Could -- Mayor Shay, could you  
20 introduce yourself, please.

21 MR. SHAY: Yes, sir. This is Mayor -- Jack  
22 Shay, Mayor of the Ketchikan Gateway Borough.

23 MR. DALTON: And Susan.

24 MS. DICKINSON: This is Susan Dickinson, I'm  
25 the Planning Director in Ketchikan, and, unfortunately, I'm at

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1 the airport, so my windows are already closed.  
2 MR. DALTON: Mary, are there agency folks  
3 present with you?

4 MS. KLUGHERZ: Yes, there are, would you like  
5 to introduce yourselves, maybe Jack, you can start.

6 MR. GUSTAFSON: Jack Gustafson, Alaska  
7 Department of Fish and Game and area habitat [indisc.].

8 MR. DALTON: Could everybody hear?  
9 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No.

10 MR. GUSTAFSON: Jack Gustafson, Department of  
11 Fish and Game, area habitat biologist here in Ketchikan.

12 MR. DALTON: Okay. [Indisc.].

13 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: John Hill, Ketchikan  
14 Gateway Borough Planning Department.

15 MR. DALTON: Okay.

16 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Jonathan Lappin; I'm  
17 the same.

18 MR. JOHNSON: Bud Johnson, Cape Fox  
19 Corporation.

20 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Aneta Synan, Ketchikan  
21 Gateway Borough Planning Department.

22 MS. MARTHALER: Susan Marthaller, I'm with  
23 the Forest Service for the Ketchikan District [indisc.].

24 MR. OIEN: My name is Jack Oien,  
25 Transportation and Planner with U.S. Forest Service.

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1 MS. KLUGHERZ: That's it with us.  
2 MR. DALTON: That's it, Mary?  
3 MS. KLUGHERZ: Yeah, that's it.  
4 MR. DALTON: Okay. Carla.  
5 MS. SLATONBARKER: Anchorage's turn?  
6 MR. DALTON: Please.  
7 MR. STEININGER: Anchorage, please.  
8 MR. LOMEN: This is Jim Lomen, FAA Airports  
9 Division.  
10 MR. DALTON: Okay.  
11 MR. GOWARD: Clarence Goward, FAA Air Traffic  
12 Division.  
13 MR. DALTON: I'm sorry, could you repeat your  
14 name?  
15 MR. GOWARD: Clarence Goward.  
16 MR. DALTON: Clarence. Okay.  
17 MS. SLATONBARKER: And that's everybody here.  
18 MR. STEININGER: Okay. And here in Juneau,  
19 we'll start with you, Jennifer.  
20 MS. GARLAND: This is Jennifer Garland, I'm  
21 with the Division of Governmental Coordination representing  
22 the Coastal Zone Management Program.  
23 MS. SHAW: Hi, this is Linda Shaw, National  
24 Marine Fisheries Service.  
25 MR. ANDERSON: Jim Anderson, Department of

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1 Natural Resources.  
2 MR. HELFINSTINE: Jim Helfinstine with the  
3 17th Coast Guard District Bridge Administration Program.  
4 MR. DUNCAN: Steve Duncan with the Corps of  
5 Engineers.  
6 MR. LEEDS: Oh, well I'm John Leeds, I'm with  
7 the Corps of Engineers here in Juneau.  
8 MR. YOST: Reuben Yost, DOT Regional  
9 Environmental Coordinator.  
10 MR. BALLARD: Bill Ballard, State  
11 Environmental Coordinator, DOT.  
12 MR. SCHRADER: Carl Schrader, Department of  
13 Environmental Conservation.  
14 MR. KEEN: Okay. I thank you very much for  
15 attending today. I'd like to go through and do a little bit  
16 on the project history. As you know, the hard link has  
17 actually been studied down in this area from -- in Ketchikan  
18 over from Revilla Island over to Gravina Island since the  
19 1970s. The most recent work was started in 1991 when the EIS  
20 was initiated to look at a hard link from the city of  
21 Ketchikan over to the airport. That project was carried to a  
22 draft environmental document, it was never finalized and, in  
23 fact, what -- the work that we will be doing will be building  
24 on much of the information that was either developed or --  
25 developed or obtained as part of that study. But I should

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1 point out that the purpose of that project was really to  
2 develop a hard link specifically to the airport. This project  
3 is much broader in its context and focus, and in that regard,  
4 we will, I anticipate, probably deviate from some of that work  
5 and will supplement it accordingly. I'd like to -- in front  
6 of us is some of the previous crossing concepts, and I want to  
7 just point out, first, that we will be looking at all  
8 alternatives. I know that the legislation specifically talks  
9 about a bridge, but I think it's important, just from the very  
10 nature of the project that we're carrying forward, we view  
11 this as the Gravina Access Project. There will be, as I  
12 mentioned, a look at the existing ferry service and a no  
13 action alternative, of course. We will also look at -- at the  
14 enhanced ferry service as well. In the past, there's been  
15 some discussion about some tunnel options, and on the map here  
16 that shows some of the previous work, we're identifying the  
17 crossing locations of a couple tunnels that have been  
18 considered and that we will look at as part of our initial  
19 studies. In addition, there are a series of bridge crossing  
20 alternatives, beginning on the south end by the city of Saxman  
21 and going all the way up north by Ward Cove and there's a  
22 series of crossings. We will look at bridge alternatives as  
23 well. So the -- the -- kind of the process that we're going  
24 to follow here is to conduct our scoping, hear your issues and  
25 comments, not only on the alternatives that are -- have been

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1 studied in the past, specifically any potential impacts as it  
2 relates to resources in the area. And then we will begin a  
3 screening process where we begin to evaluate the different  
4 alternatives. Part of that process may end up if we eliminate  
5 some of the crossing alternatives or some of the alignments or  
6 we end up with completely new alignment alternatives as well.  
7 And the idea is that we're eventually going to get down to a  
8 select number of reasonable alternatives that we'll carry  
9 forward in the environmental document. In terms of our  
10 schedule, Al had mentioned we started the process in July of  
11 this year, when we received our notice to proceed. We've been  
12 conducting a series of scoping activities here for the last  
13 month or so, culminating in the meeting today and the meeting  
14 next week, we're having a planning fair, and we'll open up for  
15 public comment on the -- department public scoping process.  
16 We anticipate that we'll get to a draft EIS in the summer of  
17 2000. Assuming we come out of that process with a build  
18 alternative, we -- then HDR is under contract to begin the  
19 final design of that alternative, whichever it may be. The  
20 final design would then be complete, we kind of anticipate, at  
21 this point, the spring of 2002, at which time construction  
22 would begin on the proposed action and we would anticipate  
23 that whatever alternative is selected would be complete with  
24 construction in the spring of 2005. So that talks a little  
25 bit about our schedule. With that, I'd like to have John

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1 McPherson talk now a little bit about some of the ongoing  
2 parallel activities.

3 MR. MCPHERSON: Thanks. This is John

4 McPherson with HDR and -- and I'm a planner. Concurrent with  
5 the -- the Gravina Access Project, the Borough initiated a  
6 series of different planning studies to -- to run concurrent  
7 with Gravina Access. There's really four separate elements  
8 that make up what is being called Ketchikan 2020 and the four  
9 elements being a Gravina Island comprehensive plan and update  
10 to their coastal management program. A wetland watershed  
11 planning effort and then finally an update -- an overall  
12 update to their comprehensive plan. Most specific to the  
13 Gravina Access Project is this Gravina Island comprehensive  
14 plan and it's -- it's kind of a unique opportunity to -- to do  
15 a comprehensive plan in conjunction with this NEPA document in  
16 that the citizens and -- and residents of Ketchikan and the  
17 Ketchikan Gateway Borough have the opportunity to identify  
18 issues and set some vision and -- and goals and objectives for  
19 what they want to see happen on Gravina Island and -- and so  
20 that has the opportunity to allow some better definition in  
21 the NEPA process on what will happen on Gravina Island, so  
22 rather than us sitting in an office somewhere trying to think  
23 up what might happen as a result of improved access, the  
24 residents and -- and citizens there have an opportunity to  
25 actually shape what will happen there. Another important

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1 aspect of that is -- is the ability to have better and -- and  
2 more thorough public involvement as part of the NEPA process,  
3 whereas instead of leaving it off after scoping and coming  
4 back when we've got alternatives, the concurrent planning  
5 efforts will provide opportunities for citizens to be involved  
6 all the way through to the -- in -- in developing those  
7 alternatives concurrent with the -- with the NEPA document.  
8 The second project is the coastal management program update  
9 and -- and that's -- it's -- it's been a while since the  
10 Borough has updated their coastal management program, so  
11 they've initiated with DGC this effort to update the  
12 information in the -- the resource inventory, reestablish  
13 issues, goals and objectives as a part of that program and  
14 redraft enforceable policies to guide development within the  
15 coastal zone. The third piece of work is a wetland watershed  
16 plan and the part that we're involved with up to this point is  
17 developing a scope of work to be submitted to the  
18 Environmental Protection Agency on what it would it take to  
19 establish a general permit in the Borough. The Borough's  
20 interested in -- in working towards a general permit much like  
21 Anchorage and Juneau have, something that would allow them to  
22 have better information when they go into the development  
23 process and something that would streamline wetland  
24 development at the local level. The -- the scope of work on  
25 that would be to request money to do the -- the -- the wetland

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1 mapping and functional assessment that would need to be done  
2 to support a general permit in the Borough. And finally the  
3 fourth element to Ketchikan 2020 is -- is this overall update  
4 of their comprehensive plan. Each one of these -- the three  
5 elements I described really fits within this bigger context  
6 and recognizing that ideally you would update the -- the  
7 comprehensive plan first, I think as we go into this, we  
8 recognize that in our first phase of issue identification goal  
9 setting, talking about vision that we know we need to think  
10 about those elements Borough-wide so that we set a good base  
11 for these elements that really fit within the comp plan. Our  
12 schedule is -- is set up to -- to parallel the Gravina Access  
13 Project and to actually build off of information that's  
14 developed by Gravina Access. So in that sense, we would be  
15 sort of following along behind Gravina Access Project in -- as  
16 they develop information, the -- the Borough then can use that  
17 information and supplement it so that they have sufficient  
18 information to -- to do their planning. One of the key areas  
19 where I think the two plans will interface is, is as you  
20 develop crossing or access alternatives that within each -- or  
21 after you've -- you've got each of those specific  
22 alternatives, you then build a land use transportation plan  
23 around each of those so that when you get done with -- with --  
24 after you have each of the alternatives and then you develop  
25 an alternative -- plan alternative around it so that wherever

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1 the crossing happens to -- to occur, you now have some -- some  
2 definition, some -- some known information about what the  
3 Borough would like to see happen if that crossing alternative  
4 becomes a preferred alternative. And I think with that, I'm  
5 probably done, but ...

6 MR. KEEN: All right, thanks John, this is  
7 Eric Keen again. As you can see, there's a real comprehensive  
8 planning effort that's ongoing in conjunction with the Gravina  
9 Access Project. As John points out, I think it provides us  
10 with a great opportunity to look at not only the impacts  
11 associated with Gravina crossing alternatives, specifically,  
12 but also to take a look at some of the cumulative and  
13 secondary impacts associated with those alternatives. At this  
14 time I'd like Mark Dalton to talk a little bit about the draft  
15 purpose and need and the concurrent process.

16 MR. DALTON: Thank you, Eric. Just -- just  
17 joining us is Ken Vaughan with the U.S. Forest Service, for  
18 everyone's information. And a float plane taking off in  
19 Ketchikan, we presume.

20 MS. KLUGHERZ: Hey, I even picked up the  
21 phone.

22 MR. DALTON: Okay. Just out the outset, what  
23 I want to say about purpose and need is that our intent is to  
24 get a draft purpose and need statement out for agency review  
25 as -- as quickly as possible. The statement is being

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1 developed jointly between -- or by the -- the Department of  
2 Transportation and the Ketchikan Gateway Borough and if you  
3 were able to see, especially folks in Ketchikan, there was a  
4 newspaper insert that came out introducing the project in the  
5 Saturday Ketchikan Daily News, folks in Juneau have copies of  
6 that, and I believe there are copies in Anchorage as well. We  
7 talk a little bit in that newspaper insert about the need for  
8 the project. And simply put, it's really to improve  
9 transportation between Revilla Island and Gravina Island and  
10 as Eric mentioned, there's a pretty long history that -- that  
11 helps establish that need. The purpose, though, also as Eric  
12 alluded to, has expanded over what was anticipated in the 1994  
13 draft EIS, and that is in addition to gaining improved access  
14 to the airport, and when we say improved access, we're talking  
15 about greater reliability and convenience for people traveling  
16 between the airport and Revilla. But we also see a need -- or  
17 a purpose of the project to unify Borough lands, and that is  
18 to help the Borough gain access to some of its landbase on  
19 Gravina Island. In addition, economic development has -- has  
20 been a purpose that -- that has been identified for this  
21 project, and an important one. There's -- there is a need --  
22 or there -- the purpose of the project is to foster  
23 development that really helps insure the community's vitality  
24 well into the -- the next millennium. We do intend to develop  
25 the purpose and need jointly between DOT and the Borough. And

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1 in addition, we will be using the agency concurrence process  
2 so that the project will be conducted in compliance with the  
3 interagency agreement on merging the NEPA process with the  
4 section 404 process. So if there was any question about that,  
5 let me put that to rest, that this is how the project will be  
6 developed. And given that there are three concurrent steps,  
7 and just to -- to state those for those who may not be  
8 familiar with that process, the agencies, and there's a number  
9 of resource agencies, I believe it's eight that are actually  
10 signatory to the agreement and at key steps in the NEPA  
11 process, specifically the draft statement of purpose and need,  
12 the identification, the range of reasonable alternatives and  
13 then the identification of the preferred alternative. At each  
14 of those steps, the agencies have a -- a -- an opportunity to  
15 concur with the identification of either purpose and need or  
16 reasonable alternatives or the preferred alternative. We hope  
17 to initiate the concurrence on the purpose and need shortly.  
18 I guess at this point, this might be a good time to open it up  
19 to some question and answer, if -- if folks want to clarify  
20 some of the things that have been said or ask questions about  
21 the project in general. We really would hope to focus in on  
22 process related questions at this point, and I'll let Anne --  
23 Anne take the floor.

24 MS. BROOKS: Yeah, what we'd like to do is if  
25 you have a question, to state your name, 'cause we are

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1 recording it, that way we'll -- we'll capture on our -- on our  
2 recorder who's got the question. But Mary, let's start -- or  
3 maybe we'll start with Jack and -- and Susan, and make sure if  
4 you have any questions we have those answered.

5 MR. SHAY: Shay here, I have no questions at  
6 this time, thanks.

7 MS. MARTHALLER: Susan, I have no questions at  
8 this time.

9 MS. BROOKS: Ketchikan?

10 MR. DALTON: Mary?

11 MS. KLUGHERZ: I'm here and everyone's shaking  
12 their head; they have no questions at this time.

13 MS. BROOKS: Okay. Any questions here? Jen.

14 MS. GARLAND: This is Jen Garland, actually  
15 the question is kind of for the Borough folks as well as the  
16 team here. I was wondering where the Lewis Reef industrial  
17 development fit into this whole process or if it isn't going  
18 to be a part of this in some way.

19 MS. DICKINSON: Well, this is Susan, and I  
20 think that's a good question, Jennifer, and I've been working  
21 with Mark Dalton and John McPherson to talk about the Lewis  
22 Reef project. I'm going to be in Juneau on Thursday and I'm  
23 going to meet with Chris Gionatti and I think that we have to  
24 look at how this does all fit together. In the past, we have  
25 looked at Lewis Reef development as a project by itself, but

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1 certainly it fits -- fits into this larger picture, and I  
2 think that we're still trying to see exactly how that's going  
3 to play out, but the Gravina Island plan should help define  
4 the purpose and need for -- for the development at Lewis Reef  
5 or the development beyond there. So I think that it fits in,  
6 but I can't say exactly how right now.

7 MS. GARLAND: Okay, thanks.

8 MS. BROOKS: Any other questions? Yes, sir.

9 MR. LEEDS: The last meeting I went to in  
10 Ketchikan ...

11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Could you just ...

12 MR. LEEDS: ... -- oh, the name is John Leeds,  
13 Corps of Engineers. The last meeting I went to, it was in  
14 Ketchikan on the same subject, they were talking about the  
15 airport having some expansion concerns, they were talking  
16 about expanding. Will that play -- is that still a go and is  
17 that going to play any sort of -- have any sort of involvement  
18 or sort of redirect our -- this access project?

19 MS. BROOKS: I'm going to let Mark address  
20 that. We -- we are working with the State and their -- and  
21 their airport master planning folks, they have -- they have a  
22 consultant on contract right now and they're doing a master  
23 plan for the airport, and we will link them into the process.

24 MR. LEEDS: Now is that going to have --  
25 that's going to be a -- sort of a major undertaking, isn't

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1 that going to have some sort of -- isn't that going to sort of  
2 direct some of the alternatives?

3 MR. DALTON: I -- I think -- I think again, as  
4 John McPherson pointed out when talking about Ketchikan 2020,  
5 we have the luxury in this NEPA process of having the airport  
6 master plan process underway for Ketchikan International  
7 Airport, and we intend to work with them quite closely. They  
8 -- they are not -- my understanding is they have not gotten to  
9 the point of talking about specific alternatives, they've --  
10 they've begun doing the forecasting of future needs, but --  
11 but haven't then gone to the next step to talk about  
12 alternatives, but ...

13 MR. LEEDS: Have they given you an idea of a  
14 schedule?

15 MR. DALTON: We do have an idea of a schedule,  
16 but the short answer is that we will be linking very closely  
17 with -- with what they're looking at to make sure that -- that  
18 we're working in concert with one another.

19 MS. BROOKS: Other questions. Yes.

20 MS. SHAW: I have a question. This is Linda  
21 Shaw with National Marine Fisheries Service. My question is  
22 the relationship between the Ketchikan 2020 and the NEPA sort  
23 of a merger agreement in terms of the resource agency rules.  
24 Are resource agencies going to be involved in this Ketchikan  
25 2020 process or -- or not?

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1 MR. MCPHERSON: Well, I think that you could  
2 think of in your -- your role in that process would be your --  
3 the way your -- you function in any time a community updates  
4 its -- its plans, so I don't know that there's a formal role  
5 as part of the merger process, but we're -- we're definitely  
6 going to try to -- to tie and link planning alternatives with  
7 -- with crossing alternatives so that they make sense, you  
8 know, from one side of -- from one island to another and in --  
9 in terms of -- I would think of your role in -- in Ketchikan  
10 2020 the way you would respond or -- or relate to a local  
11 government in any comprehensive plan update.

12 MS. DICKINSON: Mark, this is Susan, and I'd  
13 just like to say that one of the reasons that we're having the  
14 planning fair in Ketchikan on the 6th and 7th is to bring all  
15 of the agencies together to say all this stuff is going on at  
16 the same time. While our process doesn't require the same  
17 level of involvement as the NEPA process, we are encouraging  
18 the agencies to give us their comments so that we can fit them  
19 into whatever venues they -- they need -- reasonably need to  
20 go in. If there are -- let's say there are wetlands issues or  
21 there are habitat issues, that would be covered under our  
22 coastal management program update, but we could also give that  
23 same information to the mental health land trust because we're  
24 getting them to work on their land plan for Gravina at the  
25 same time the Forest Service has their Gravina Island project

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1 going on, so even though we don't have an integrated process  
2 where we are meeting the same agency criteria, we certainly  
3 are gathering and sharing information.

4 MS. BROOKS: Thank you. Yes, sir.

5 MR. DUNCAN: This is Steve Duncan with the  
6 Corps of Engineers and I'm -- would like to -- I'd like to  
7 have, in writing, some of the things that you guys have  
8 mentioned here. You have your needs statements sort of  
9 outlined in this newspaper insert that we got, you mentioned  
10 some things about your purpose, I don't see that written down  
11 anywhere. Also, this list of all of these things that are  
12 going on in Ketchikan and kind of an explanation of what those  
13 are all about, it would be nice to have that to be able to sit  
14 down and look at it as we're going through this.

15 MS. BROOKS: And then that's specifically the  
16 planning fair that we're talking about next week.

17 MR. DUNCAN: I'd like to have it before the  
18 planning fair if we could, ...

19 MS. BROOKS: Sure. Absolutely.

20 MR. DUNCAN: ... I mean that would help, I  
21 think, in deciding what we want to do at the planning fair.

22 MS. BROOKS: Absolutely.

23 MR. DALTON: And -- and Steve, again, as -- as  
24 I mentioned earlier, we're trying to develop the draft  
25 statement of purpose and need, that's a collaboration between

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1 the project team and the Borough, so as soon as we get  
2 something that -- that we can agree on, it's -- it's going to  
3 be made available to the agencies, and then that begins that  
4 first 50-day concurrence clock under the -- the merged  
5 [indisc.].

6 MR. DUNCAN: But you don't have just a draft  
7 draft that you could get to us prior to this planning fair?

8 MR. DALTON: I'm hopeful that I'll have  
9 something to you prior to the planning fair.

10 MR. DUNCAN: And as far as the other stuff  
11 goes, the list of all of the things that are going on,  
12 including your airport expansion ...

13 MS. BROOKS: Um-hum, um-hum.

14 MR. DUNCAN: ... and the comprehensive  
15 planning and an explanation of what all of those are.

16 MS. BROOKS: Yeah.

17 MR. DALTON: We -- we can get that.

18 MR. KEEN: It'd be nice to see it on one piece  
19 of paper one day.

20 MR. DUNCAN: Yeah.

21 MS. BROOKS: Yeah.

22 MR. DALTON: We can get that.

23 MR. KEEN: Get it going.

24 MR. DALTON: Good suggestion.

25 MS. BROOKS: Yeah.

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1 MR. KEEN: Yeah.  
2 MS. BROOKS: Other questions?  
3 MR. DALTON: Any questions in Anchorage?  
4 MS. SLATONBARKER: Oh, I guess we're all set.  
5 MS. BROOKS: Okay, we ...  
6 MR. VAUGHAN: Can I throw in a concern?  
7 MS. BROOKS: Sure.  
8 MR. VAUGHAN: Hi Susan, this is Ken Vaughan.  
9 Over the last few weeks/months, there's a number of large  
10 projects going on in the Ketchikan area, ...  
11 MS. BROOKS: Um-hum.  
12 MR. VAUGHAN: ... and I've observed that a lot  
13 of people are blurring the edges between them, where one ends,  
14 another begins, an overlap between the Shelter Cove Road  
15 system, the Southeast Alaska transportation, the ferry  
16 expansions, the Metlakatla road, the airport, Gravina Island  
17 planning, and it may be really helpful if everybody's very  
18 clear and works really hard to make sure that people don't  
19 become more confused, ...  
20 MS. BROOKS: Um-hum.  
21 MR. VAUGHAN: ... as all these kind of zipper  
22 together and overlap in parts with each other. There's a lot  
23 of complexity there.  
24 MS. MARTHALLER: Well, I think -- I think  
25 that's a good point and part -- the Borough has contracted

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1 with HDR Engineering, and John McPherson is the -- the lead  
2 person in our Ketchikan 2020 planning effort and John Hill in  
3 the -- the planning department is the planner assigned to that  
4 project, and so I hope that John and John, you're hearing  
5 this, and that because there's so many different agencies  
6 doing things and it does seem to all be coming to a head at  
7 once, we will be addressing all of that for sure in our  
8 coastal management plan update because that deals with all the  
9 transportation issues but also as we go into our comprehensive  
10 plan.  
11 MR. DALTON: Okay.  
12 MS. BROOKS: More questions or comments? Yes.  
13 MS. GARLAND: I have one, this is Jen Garland  
14 again. I was just wondering, because there are, as Ken  
15 mentioned, a bunch of different things going on, but I -- I  
16 don't assume that they'll all be permitted at the same time,  
17 so to speak, like the timber sale that's coming up will be on  
18 a different schedule then say, other things. So like you  
19 said, it is a little confusing as to what is coordinated when  
20 and how we're going to keep all these things straight, so I  
21 assume that we'll be informed as to what is taking place at  
22 what time and things like that with the Forest Service  
23 [indisc.].  
24 MR. DALTON: And -- and to that point, this is  
25 Mark Dalton, I -- I really encourage as many folks as

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1 possible, agency people, to attend the planning fair in  
2 Ketchikan, because I think that's our intent is to make sure  
3 that in -- in particular, the public is not confused by all  
4 the different processes that are now underway and -- and we're  
5 hoping that by having this planning fair, we can actually show  
6 that, hey, look at this, different arms of the government can  
7 actually work together and -- and, boy, this sort of makes  
8 sense. So that's -- that's our intent and -- and we really  
9 need everyone's help to pull that off.

10 MS. DICKINSON: I guess I'll just mention at  
11 this point, this is Susan again, that I had an e-mail this  
12 morning from Lisa Holzapfel from the Mental Health Trust  
13 Office and she wanted to know what kind of a booth they want -  
14 - we wanted her to set up or what kind of information might be  
15 valuable, and so Mark, I don't know if you want to talk about  
16 that at all about if agencies come what they might expect.

17 MR. DALTON: I -- I think that's a good point,  
18 if I could hold that, Susan, for maybe when we get into what's  
19 next ...

20 MS. DICKINSON: R: Okay.

21 MR. DALTON: ... we'll bring that up. At this  
22 point, ...

23 MS. BROOKS: At this ...

24 MR. DALTON: ... are there any other -- any  
25 other questions specific to the Gravina access project?

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1 MS. BROOKS: We scheduled a break here at this  
2 point. Do we want to go ahead and take that for -- cut it  
3 short, maybe 10 minutes, or do we want to keep going?

4 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Keep going.

5 MS. GARLAND: What are the limitations on,  
6 say, Susan who's at the airport?

7 MR. DALTON: Yeah, Susan's what's your --  
8 what's your drop dead date there or time?

9 MS. DICKINSON: I have to leave here in one  
10 hour and 20 minutes, I have to go get on my plane.

11 MR. DALTON: Oh, okay. Okay.

12 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Take five.

13 MR. DALTON: Why don't we take a five-minute  
14 break, ...

15 MS. BROOKS: Okay, five-minute break.

16 MR. DALTON: ... and then we'll resume with  
17 agency comments.

18 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Five minutes.

19 [Off Record]

20 [On Record]

21 MR. DALTON: Let's bring it back. How we  
22 doing in Ketchikan and Anchorage?

23 MS. KLUGHERZ: We're all here in Ketchikan,  
24 ready and waiting.

25 MR. DALTON: Okay.

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1 MS. SLATONBARKER: Anchorage, we have a  
2 request, we've got [indisc.] so we wondered if we could -- the  
3 agency comments in Anchorage could be picked up, sort of first  
4 in line rather than last in line.

5 MS. BROOKS: That sounds -- that sounds good,  
6 Carla. We actually thought we'd start with Susan and Jack, if  
7 they had comments since they're at Sitka and waiting for the  
8 airport in Ketchikan respectively, so ...

9 MR. DALTON: We can do those two and then  
10 we'll go to -- go to Anchorage.

11 MS. BROOKS: Then we'll go to Anchorage.

12 MS. SLATONBARKER: Great, thanks.

13 MS. GARLAND: Can I just -- this is Jen again,  
14 I just wanted to ask a little bit of what you're -- what  
15 exactly you're looking for, just the things you've -- you've  
16 outlined here or something different?

17 MR. DALTON: Well, just -- just so everybody  
18 is clear, NEPA scoping has some pretty specific outcomes or  
19 desired outcomes, and we'd really like to know if you have any  
20 issues or concerns at this point that can help us kind of  
21 define what we need to do in -- as we develop study plans as  
22 we develop, you know, engineering and environmental approaches  
23 to -- to -- to this work. We'd like to know if there's  
24 information that an agency has that they -- they feel we  
25 should know to help us do -- do this work. We'd also like to

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1 know if there's opportunity for an agency to actually  
2 participate with us in -- in developing some of the  
3 information, so if we have to go out and generate some raw  
4 data, maybe there's -- there's an opportunity for a resource  
5 agency to participate in that. So that -- that's really what  
6 we're looking for at this point.

7 MS. GARLAND: So some specifics, maybe, if we  
8 have them.

9 MR. DALTON: As -- as many specifics at this  
10 point as possible, yes. So, with that ...

11 MS. BROOKS: With that, Jack.

12 MR. SHAY: Yes, I -- I have received a  
13 communication from Lew Williams, the famous former publisher  
14 of the Ketchikan Daily News, it's addressed to his Honor,  
15 Mayor Jack Shay until Tom [Indisc.] takes over.

16 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Please.

17 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No commentaries.

18 MR. SHAY: And he -- he sent some pictures, he  
19 said you may have seen this in your travels, it's the bridge  
20 from San Diego to Coronado across San Diego Bay, it's high  
21 enough for aircraft carriers to go under, I went under it in  
22 August at a World War II Army reunion and these tall piers are  
23 manufactured elsewhere and floated into place and sunk and  
24 anchored. If you -- you'd like to see these in case you don't  
25 have that down there already, I'd be glad to give the -- the

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1 photos to Ms. Klugherz. And to be more specific, however, I -  
2 - of course the -- the continued operation of ferries or the  
3 increased operation of ferries probably has the least overall  
4 environmental impact, perhaps, looking at the mission as a  
5 part of that. And then I'm thinking that -- that the next one  
6 may be some -- some type of tunnel, either the type of tunnel  
7 we discussed before where -- where it is -- where it is  
8 suspended from the bottom and sort of laid on the bottom,  
9 which would make it extremely long -- extremely long  
10 enterprise and then of course the bridge probably is -- is the  
11 most serious environmental impact that presents the most  
12 serious impact because of -- because of the approaches  
13 involved in this and also it becomes a hazard to marine as  
14 well as aerial navigation. At any rate, I think we -- we can  
15 continue to look at all the alternatives. My mind is still  
16 open, I'm -- I'm encouraged by participation of the agencies.  
17 and the fact that we're going to work together on all --  
18 integrating all these plans. I -- I think that -- that we're  
19 -- that someone has probably already looked at the, as was  
20 pointed out, that access with some kind of [indisc.] and so  
21 forth to Gravina and associated [indisc.] there some political  
22 problems with that as you're well aware, but I don't think  
23 they're insurmountable. But anyway, I'd like to hear from  
24 Susan Dickinson, our planner.

25 MS. DICKINSON: I think that you covered it

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1 really well, Jack. We're not trying to advocate for any  
2 particular type of crossing, we just know that the Borough  
3 owns large tracts of land on Gravina Island that are  
4 considerably flatter than the lands that we have on the  
5 Revilla side. There are developable lands that the Mental  
6 Health Trust owns and they're looking to increase their  
7 benefits to their beneficiaries so if those lands could  
8 generate revenue either through sale or through development  
9 they're interested in that. And I think that one of the  
10 biggest differences between the last time that we looked at  
11 this and now is that the Borough now has ownership of its land  
12 and the Mental Health Trust lawsuit has been settled and -- so  
13 there's no more ambiguity about whether the Borough is  
14 actually going to have title to the land, so we'd like to see  
15 all reasonable alternatives discussed and we'll go for the  
16 best one.

17 MR. SHAY: Thanks, Sue.

18 MS. BROOKS: Thank you, Susan. Moving on to  
19 Anchorage.

20 MR. GOWARD: Clarence Goward with -- with the  
21 FAA Traffic Division, often and I think most of our concern  
22 deals with the -- the bridge alternative and primarily because  
23 -- for -- for two reasons actually, one is because between the  
24 islands there is a heavily used VFR corridor that's used by a  
25 lot of float plane operators and -- and -- and VFR aircraft

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1 and -- that fly at low levels through there, oftentimes below  
2 500 feet and so a bridge would have a significant -- it would  
3 -- it would likely shut that -- that operation down. The --  
4 the instrument approaches going into Ketchikan would likely be  
5 effected depending upon where and how high the bridges are,  
6 it's hard to determine the -- exactly the impact until we have  
7 the answers to those questions, but the minimum would likely  
8 go up, meaning that aircraft inbound during low weather  
9 situations may not be able to get into -- into Ketchikan. So  
10 those are -- are our primary concerns and flight standards  
11 would need to be involved in that -- they would be heavily  
12 involved in the VFR operations and could probably better  
13 address the impact as well as the imposed minimum.

14 MR. LOMEN: And I guess on the airport side,  
15 this is Jim Lomen with FAA, we just had a primary concern, now  
16 all of a sudden if there is a connection between the two, what  
17 kind of impact will it have on the land side development on  
18 the airport and, you know, currently, most of the parking is  
19 on the other side and if that access is opened up, you know,  
20 what kind of impact will that have on the airport, so -- and I  
21 have addressed that to the master plan consultants.

22 MR. DALTON: Okay.

23 MS. BROOKS: Thank you. Any other comments in  
24 Anchorage?

25 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I think that's it.

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1 MS. BROOKS: All right, let's move on to  
2 Ketchikan.

3 MS. DICKINSON: I'm asking if anybody here has  
4 agency comments. Susan does, just a moment.

5 MS. MARTHALLER: This is Susan Marthaller with  
6 the Ketchikan Ranger District, I'm the planner there for the  
7 Gravina project. And the Forest Service concerns are, we're  
8 planning a timber sale in that area and alternatives including  
9 having roads or not having roads and we're -- we're thinking  
10 about the access into the area and how that would fit in with  
11 access from the airport and if that would be a possibility too  
12 for recreational access into other parts of the island.

13 MS. BROOKS: Okay, any other comments?

14 MR. DALTON: Susan, what's the timing on the  
15 timber sale?

16 MS. MARTHALLER: We're hoping to go out with a  
17 draft in January.

18 MR. DALTON: Draft on the environmental  
19 document?

20 MS. MARTHALLER: Yes.

21 MR. DALTON: Okay.

22 MS. DICKINSON: I think that's all for  
23 Ketchikan.

24 MR. DALTON: Okay, and I should probably add  
25 that, this is Mark Dalton, that I had met in Ketchikan with

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1 both Steve Brockman [ph] and Jack Gustafson and we spent a  
2 couple hours together discussing issues and -- and resource  
3 concerns, so Jack I think a lot of that has already been  
4 covered, and we'll provide you a copy of my notes from that  
5 meeting.

6 MR. GUSTAFSON: Okay, thanks [indisc.] you  
7 know more about that than I do. The alternative might be for  
8 [indisc.].

9 MR. DALTON: Yeah. Okay.

10 MS. BROOKS: Thank you. Let's start here,  
11 we're ...

12 MS. SLATONBARKER: [Indisc.] something, we're  
13 having some fading out troubles when people are speaking.

14 MS. BROOKS: We'll do what we can to speak  
15 louder, Carla, does that help?

16 MS. SLATONBARKER: That's much better, thanks.

17 MS. BROOKS: Okay. Where do we want to start  
18 here? Who is -- DEC [indisc.].

19 MR. SCHRADER: Sure, I'm Carl Schrader, excuse  
20 me, Department of Environmental Conservation and -- and  
21 probably from my agency's point of view, what type of specific  
22 details of the flavor of crossing that we have aren't as big  
23 as the ultimate issue of the development of Gravina Island and  
24 what that impact is likely to be on aquatic resources  
25 including streams, lakes, wetlands, shoreline and that type of

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1 thing, I guess you could call it more of the cumulative  
2 impacts, but that's really what we're talking about is a  
3 tremendous amount of land that would potentially be developed  
4 and how are we going to assure that proper environmental  
5 safeguards are in place to protect those resources.

6 MS. BROOKS: Okay. Corps of Engineers.

7 MR. DUNCAN: A lot of you probably know

8 anyway, the -- the bridge itself is a -- the Corps of  
9 Engineers would not be permitting the bridge; that's a Coast  
10 Guard issue. And so until the -- until we actually get into a  
11 design phase that would -- if there were going to be

12 approaches or -- then the Corps of Engineers would actually  
13 get actively involved. I'm -- I'm hoping to be involved on  
14 this as we go along. Probably, just looking at it right now,  
15 the -- my main concerns are the host of impacts that would be  
16 associated not with the bridge development itself, but with  
17 the secondary and cumulative impacts because it does open up a  
18 vast area over there and I guess, too, I'm not really clear,  
19 in looking at the photo and everything here, we see all of  
20 these alternatives, potential alternatives for the bridge and  
21 then we see a road system in there too, and are we doing the  
22 road system in -- at the same time we're doing the bridge?

23 MR. KEEN: To provide access to the airport.

24 MR. DUNCAN: Okay, well, I don't really know  
25 what that means, I mean are we going to -- all of the orange

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1 dashed lines that we're seeing on here right now, if --  
2 whatever alternative is chosen, are we essentially talking  
3 about that entire system of orange dashed lines that are on  
4 there and that's going to be addressed with -- okay, so then  
5 we ...

6 MR. DALTON: That's correct.

7 MR. DUNCAN: ... would have involvement with  
8 those because I'm sure there are -- are Corps of Engineers  
9 jurisdictional areas that ...

10 MR. DALTON: Sure.

11 MR. DUNCAN: Okay.

12 MS. DICKINSON: This is Susan, I don't have  
13 benefit of the orange dashed lines, so are we going get a copy  
14 of that map?

15 MR. DALTON: Yeah, actually Susan, Mary does  
16 have a copy with her in -- in Ketchikan and you can -- you can  
17 view that there. And I think, maybe we should clarify that  
18 the -- the intent of the map is not to show potential crossing  
19 locations; it's to show previous crossing concepts or -- or  
20 locations that -- that have been considered. At this point,  
21 we do not, as part of the Gravina Access Project, have any  
22 potential locations or types of crossings identified, so this  
23 is -- these were gleaned from the previous studies starting as  
24 early as the late '70s into the '80s and then most recently  
25 with the '94 draft EIS and that's -- that's the intent here is

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1 just to show people what was considered previously. We will  
2 be starting over, essentially with -- with the work we're  
3 doing.

4 MS. BROOKS: Okay, is that clear? Anything  
5 else? Any comments from your involvement previously  
6 [indisc.]?

7 MR. LEEDS: Well, basically, I think you're  
8 asking if we have any concerns or questions that would help us  
9 determining whether or not this -- what alternatives are  
10 available and which ones would be the most appropriate. If I  
11 had to make that sort of a determination, I would like to have  
12 some information about the bathymetry of the channel. If --  
13 I'd like have some information about the prevailing wind  
14 patterns and current patterns. If an alternative bridge goes  
15 in, whether its above or below the surface, I'd like to have  
16 some idea how the land and the water areas are going to be  
17 affected, both down [indisc.] on both sides. Will the bridge  
18 [indisc.] culvert, I mean are they -- are they a causeway or a  
19 tunnel, will that have some major changes on the shorelines?  
20 So I'd like to have a little bit more information about  
21 weather patterns, currents, that sort of thing. I'd also like  
22 to know something about the geology of some of these areas.  
23 Is there -- is there like -- is there a nice solid ground down  
24 there to attach your pilings, or is it all silt, the supports  
25 for the -- for a bridge, how would it be, would it be like

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1 steel pilings, would it have big copper [indisc.] or what  
2 would it be? And again, I'd like to have the geology along  
3 the shoreline, I'd like to be able to look for a high point,  
4 maybe, on which to [indisc.] this bridge. The higher we are  
5 on one side would be even easier to get across. That sort of  
6 information.

7 MS. BROOKS: Great. Thank you. Coast Guard.

8 MR. HELFINSTINE: Yeah, Jim Helfinstine with  
9 the 17th Coast Guard District. We have already been working  
10 with the applicant -- or the consultant and we recently  
11 provided three pages of concerns or issues that we would like  
12 to have looked at, having been involved in similar proposals  
13 in the Ketchikan area in the past. Our regulatory authority  
14 will be basically approving the plans and the location.

15 Primarily we'll be approving the minimal clearance, both where  
16 the vertical/horizontal openings of any type of bridge  
17 structure. Comments that we've already given, I don't want to  
18 go through them at this point, because they're -- they were  
19 quite a few of them, but we're currently gathering

20 information. At this point, we don't have -- I don't think  
21 it's appropriate to make comments to -- to alternatives that  
22 we haven't seen yet or haven't been brought to life other than  
23 the ones that we've had in the past, but we have been  
24 extensively working with our marine safety detachment down in  
25 Ketchikan and they developed a Tongass Narrows navigational

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1 plan, and we're still actively involved in developing as well  
2 as acquiring additional navigational information that we will  
3 provide to the applicant/consultant. Basically that's all I  
4 have to say and whatever I provide will be in writing and not  
5 on speculations. At this point it's -- you know, there's a  
6 lot of material out here. But I do have a comment to make,  
7 having been involved in a -- I won't say a similar project,  
8 but a -- a project that was done dealing with the Kenai River  
9 Bridge, Funny River project, and I just thought I'd like to  
10 throw it out. It was a project that started out with a simple  
11 bridge project and it became a very large thing because of --  
12 where this appears that this might be going with combining a  
13 lot of different comprehensive plans, a lot of different --  
14 different planning initiatives and a lot of different issues  
15 that came about and just as a -- as a -- so if somebody will  
16 look at this, they might want to check into some of the  
17 problems that they may -- that -- that occurred as a result of  
18 trying to join too many things that were very highly complex  
19 and they had a lot of players and there was a lot of confusion  
20 and a lot of agreements formulated, tied to one another and it  
21 became -- bottom line, it's been going on for, what, eight  
22 years, nine years, something like that. Just -- I thought I'd  
23 throw that out, just my own personal and professional  
24 experience, so somebody might want to take a look that.

25 MS. BROOKS: Thank you, that's a ...

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1 MR. HELPFINSTINE: And that's not being  
2 positive or negative, just a point.  
3 MS. BROOKS: Well, I -- we appreciate that.  
4 Nothing's political in Alaska, ha, ha. And so we do -- we do  
5 realize that there -- there has a potential for a lot of  
6 issues to deal with. Department of Natural Resources, any  
7 comments at this time?  
8 MR. ANDERSON: I guess for our department, it  
9 won't become really -- our involvement won't become until we  
10 actually get some alternatives identified. I don't think we  
11 have much input on formulating alternatives at this time.  
12 MR. KEEN: Any resource concerns [indisc.]?  
13 MR. ANDERSON: [Indisc.] aware of.  
14 MS. GARLAND: [Indisc.]?  
15 MR. ANDERSON: It's a -- it's a mixture of  
16 state and patented tidelands, and then there's some  
17 interagency land management [indisc.] DOT, so [indisc.]  
18 tidelands; there's some leased tidelands, those types of  
19 things. [indisc.].  
20 MR. DALTON: Jim, one -- one of the -- this is  
21 Mark Dalton, one of the issues that -- that we're trying to  
22 get a handle on -- or elements of work is accurate land status  
23 information.  
24 MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, I was looking at your map  
25 and I think I had some questions on it, so I'll look into

1 that.  
2 MR. DALTON: We appreciate your help.  
3 MR. KEEN: And you'll be the point of contact  
4 [indisc.].  
5 MR. ANDERSON: Yeah [indisc.].  
6 MR. KEEN: Okay. Thank you.  
7 MS. BROOKS: Thank you very much. National  
8 Marine Fisheries.  
9 MS. SHAW: Yeah, this is Linda Shaw with NMFS,  
10 sounds like you covered resource concerns already with Steve  
11 and Jack so I'll just add a few items that would be peculiar  
12 to NMFS. You'll want to cover your bases with essential fish  
13 habitat requirements of the Magnuson Act, and it'd probably be  
14 best if someone contacted me separate from this meeting and I  
15 can talk to you about that. Also, you might want to consider  
16 marine mammals and noise from construction activities,  
17 although again, you know, without the benefit of knowing  
18 exactly what we're talking about here, I'm not sure if that is  
19 an issue, but it's one you might think about too. And  
20 finally, I'll just mention that since you did ask about what  
21 potential help there might for studies. We do have Auke Bay  
22 Lab scientists who are doing ROB work, looking at underwater  
23 habitats and can also enlighten you on geology maybe so there  
24 is a possibility there, potential, I mean depending on their  
25 schedules and your needs and all that kind of stuff.

MS. BROOKS: That's great.

MR. DALTON: And Linda, what -- this is Mark Dalton, I will get you a copy of the meeting notes that I took between myself and Steve [indisc.].

MS. BROOKS: Yeah.

MS. MARTHALLER: This is Susan, and I just was noticing in your list of -- of issues that we're part of the materials for this -- issues identified to date, and on the second page, it says that air quality and noise had not been identified as an issue in previous projects, and I was wondering where those concerns came from, were they, from the standpoint of effect on marine mammals or eagle habitat or -- or -- where'd those come from, Mark?

MR. DALTON: Susan, what we did -- this is Mark Dalton, we went back and looked at agency comments, the scoping document that came out of the 1994 draft EIS and noise and air quality were both raised as issues in general, not specific to impacts to marine mammals, it was just noise and air quality may be an issue, depending on the alternative that's selected and that's ...

MS. MARTHALLER: Is that related to construction or to once the access would be in place?

MR. DALTON: I think -- I think it's actually both, but it wasn't specific.

MS. MARTHALLER: Okay. Thanks.

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MS. BROOKS: Okay, moving around the table, Division of Governmental Coordination.

MS. GARLAND: This Jen, and like I said earlier, my agency will have primary interest in coastal zone management program implementation of the standards contained in 60 AAC 80. We will be down there next week; Julie Penn and I will be down there next week for the planning fair.

Julie's handling the coastal planning side of DGC for Ketchikan. I -- I think that our involvement in -- in this project will be somewhat limited until there's actually designs out and applications made for -- in section 9 and the other permits that project may need, at which time, we would make sure we would initiate a review for consistency with the coastal zone management program. That looks like it's quite a ways away, so we -- one other thing that we do is we participate in the scoping efforts, get the information from DOT saying -- or you guys and distribute it to the state and the participants in the coastal district of Ketchikan, gather comments for them -- from them and then issue a single state position as we like to do with NEPA scoping efforts. So -- as well as with the consistency [indisc.]. So if anybody has questions for me about the program or anything, I will be down there next week, and I think it's a good idea to have a planning fair to get some early public involvement. We try and encourage public to join in whenever possible, so the more

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1 information they have, the better it'll be for everybody. So,  
2 that's all I have.

3 MS. BROOKS: Thank you. That leads us to  
4 Forest Service.

5 MR. VAUGHAN: I'll pass. I think the district  
6 people have spoken to the timber sale, that's the only  
7 national forest land in the project area [indisc.].

8 MS. BROOKS: Okay. And while we were on  
9 break, Jim Bryson joined us from Federal Highways, is it?  
10 Sorry to put you on the spot next. Any comments?

11 MR. BRYSON: No Comments.

12 MS. BROOKS: Okay.

13 MS. GARLAND: Is this -- I have a another  
14 question, is this FHA -- this isn't an FHA project, or is it  
15 [indisc.]?

16 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: [Indisc.].

17 MS. GARLAND: Oh. Okay.

18 MS. BROOKS: Okay. Any more comments?

19 MS. GARLAND: Wait, sorry, backing up a  
20 minute, so it is a federal highway project, they would be the  
21 applicant in that case?

22 MR. KEEN: Yes.

23 MR. DALTON: Well, DOT -- DOT's the [indisc.].

24 MS. BROOKS: DOT.

25 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: DOT's the applicant.

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MR. DALTON: Federal -- Federal Highways is  
the lead federal agency.

MS. BROOKS: I guess at that point, any  
general comments? Any additional comments?

MR. SHAY: Yeah, this Jack Shay again. At one  
of the previous meetings, I asked about the -- about the  
consideration of the creation of local jobs, and -- and I was  
told and I -- I got sort of a semi-answer that that, indeed,  
does figure in -- in the consideration of economic impacts  
upon the -- upon the area being considered, and I sincerely  
hope that that does remain one of the -- one of the items of  
consideration.

MS. BROOKS: Thank you.

MR. DALTON: Good, we appreciate that comment.

MS. BROOKS: Yes. Darcy.

MS. RICHARDS: This is Darcy Richards. I just  
want people to look over the bibliography and to note other  
sources of information and to let us know. We presented this  
bibliography so you'd know what we know to date and anything  
that you can add would be much appreciated.

MS. BROOKS: And just to let folks know, the -  
- from the public side, the notification for the meeting, the  
tabloid insert went in the Ketchikan Daily News on Saturday.  
We did have an overrun of those which will be available at the  
planning fair next week, and we will be sending every

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1 household in Ketchikan a postcard reminder to let them know  
2 about the meeting, so we think with the wide distribution, we  
3 should have good interest and participation. And with that,  
4 Mark do you want to talk about what's next?

5 MR. BALLARD: I -- I have a question, Mark,  
6 this is Bill Ballard, question -- question for the project  
7 team on -- on keeping agencies informed and what I've been --  
8 been hearing are a lot of general comments with deferring to --  
9 - until there's some alternatives identified for more specific  
10 issues. Has -- has the project team established any kind of a  
11 schedule for keeping agencies informed or status meetings,  
12 monthly status meetings or -- or what have you?

13 MR. DALTON: Well, a couple things, one, we  
14 are planning to establish what's called -- this is Mark  
15 Dalton, by the way, a project development team and once we get  
16 out of the formal scoping process, we plan to initiate that,  
17 and that would be at least monthly meetings where people would  
18 be invited and be able to access the meetings via  
19 teleconference and the meetings will probably rotate between  
20 Juneau and Ketchikan. The intent is that we'll be able to sit  
21 down with agencies and others face-to-face and talk about work  
22 products as they are -- they're developed, talked about --  
23 talk about issues, talk about the studies that are underway.  
24 That's -- that's a technique that we've used previously and --  
25 and plan to bring to this project. I don't, though, have a

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1 specific schedule built and we will try and get that out to  
2 the agencies shortly. The other -- the other side of that and  
3 -- and I think -- I appreciate the -- the question, because we  
4 are also trying to develop a project web site for this and  
5 that web site is -- is most important for the public to  
6 provide and to gain access to the project and the project  
7 team, but also agencies. We're going to actually establish it  
8 so that agencies can get access to drafts of documents in  
9 progress, and we'll be sharing more information with you on  
10 how that's going to work as we develop it. We're -- we're --  
11 the project web site, as I understand, a shell is actually  
12 available and if somebody could help me with the address, but  
13 I believe it's www.gravina-access.com, and it's on the back of  
14 the newspaper insert. And that's going to be a place for  
15 people to -- to find out important dates to provide e-mail  
16 access to the project team and -- and we hope to use that  
17 pretty aggressively on this project. And that's kind of a  
18 two-part answer there. Any other questions or comments at  
19 this point?

20 MS. GARLAND: When are you going to speak  
21 about what -- what you were hoping agencies would bring to the  
22 planning fair?

23 MR. DALTON: Yeah. Yeah. In the last sheet  
24 in your packet says what's next and we talked about the -- the  
25 public scoping and planning fair in Ketchikan. That's October

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1 6th, it's at the Ted Ferry Civic Center, and it's from 3:00  
2 'til 8:30, and I actually have a copy, I'm not sure we have  
3 copies of this in the other venues, but I have copies of a  
4 draft agenda and then a planning fair flyer that's going to be  
5 circulated in Ketchikan advertising the event. We would  
6 really like the agencies that can be there to bring  
7 information about their program and how that relates to -- to  
8 all the activities in Ketchikan. Jen, in -- in your case, I  
9 would think that anything that relates to the work that the  
10 Borough is doing as part of Ketchikan 2020 to update their  
11 coastal management program would be real germane and -- and  
12 very helpful. We also have invited the agencies to  
13 participate on October 7th also at the -- the civic center in  
14 kind of a post-planning fair meeting to talk about information  
15 sharing, to talk about how we better coordinate the different  
16 activities that are going on so that we can take some of the  
17 input that we got from the public at the planning fair,  
18 synthesize that a little bit and -- and talk about the -- the  
19 roles and responsibilities that we each have. So that's --  
20 that's what's coming up, my gosh is that next week?

21 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yes.

22 MS. MARTHALLER: Unfortunately.

23 MR. DALTON: Pardon me?

24 MS. MARTHALLER: I said unfortunately, it's

25 [indisc.].

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1 MR. DALTON: Oh no, this is -- this is good.  
2 I just have to pinch myself and realize that it's -- or  
3 September 27th. We also have a number of engineering studies  
4 that are underway, and shortly we'll be sharing with you  
5 copies of a navigation issues technical memorandum as well as  
6 an aviation issues technical memorandum. Those things are in  
7 draft form now. We need to do a little bit more review, for  
8 example, the navigation issues memo I want to share with the  
9 Coast Guard and allow them to have an opportunity. The  
10 aviation issues memo, I believe both Jim and -- and others at  
11 FAA have had a chance to review that. John Leeds, you brought  
12 up some questions about bathymetry and meteorological data,  
13 current info, geology, those are the kinds of things that we  
14 need input now as part of formal scoping to help us identify  
15 what -- what our work plans -- what our work program is, as  
16 well, under environmental studies, we're anticipating the need  
17 to identify wetlands in the project area, we talked with Jack  
18 Gustafson and -- and Steve Brockman about doing some shoreline  
19 typing information to figure out, well, is this a suitable  
20 location for a crossing or not. There's also the possibility  
21 of doing some eel grass surveys; essential fish habitat is  
22 another issue that's come up. So those are -- those give --  
23 that gives you an idea of the -- the range of engineering and  
24 environmental work that -- that we anticipate. Again, we hope  
25 to have a draft purpose and need statement out prior to the

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1 planning fair. I'm -- I'm hopeful that -- that by saying  
2 that, Susan and -- Susan Dickinson and John Hill are -- are  
3 going to be willing to work closely with us, because we really  
4 need the Borough's participation in the development of that  
5 document. Lastly, what I'd like to suggest is that we receive  
6 scoping comments back as quickly as possible, and the reason  
7 for that is, I think I've mentioned this a couple times, but  
8 we're really hoping to get in the field yet this fall, to --  
9 to begin doing some wetlands work. There's a possibility of  
10 doing some intertidal and subtidal habitat mapping work. All  
11 of this work that's going to help us identify the best  
12 alternatives possible, and the sooner we can do that, the  
13 sooner we can answer some of the -- the resource questions  
14 that have come up. To that end, I'd suggest October 13th as a  
15 date for getting stuff -- scoping comments back, and it really  
16 is our intent to try and keep things moving along. I  
17 recognize that that's a pretty aggressive schedule, because  
18 that's -- that's a little more than two weeks from today. I'm  
19 willing to -- to entertain suggestions, but we'd really like  
20 to get comments from the agencies as quickly as possible. Any  
21 -- any response to that from anybody?

22 MR. GUSTAFSON: I had question, this is Jack  
23 at Ketchikan, I was wondering if DEC is going to be  
24 coordinating the State's formal scoping [indisc.] and can you  
25 tell when they're going to begin that?

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1 MS. GARLAND: Well, it's a bit late to start  
2 now. I mean, I guess we could, but by the time we got the  
3 packet mailed out and everything, it's already well into next  
4 week and, I don't know, I guess maybe not in this case, since  
5 it's -- the deadline is so close, so I guess I'd recommend  
6 that agencies individually send in their stuff and -- and copy  
7 DGC if you can. Ideally, we would have more time and I could  
8 do this and then we'll be more coordinated on it but I don't  
9 think it's going to work in this case, we've got until the  
10 13th to meet the deadline, Jack.

11 MS. MARTHALER: And -- and this is Susan, and  
12 I guess what I would say is that there'll be a number of  
13 methods for people to give comments at the planning fair and  
14 we could take scoping comments at the planning fair, wouldn't  
15 you say, Mark?

16 MR. DALTON: We definitely intend to take  
17 public scoping comments at the planning fair, yes. And -- and  
18 I should clarify that -- that agency scoping comments should  
19 come to Al Steininger, the DOT project manager, they should be  
20 addressed to Al. Any other comments or ...

21 MR. DUNCAN: You didn't address what sort of a  
22 layout or setup you were -- you wanted us to have or was going  
23 to be available for us at the planning fair.

24 MR. DALTON: Thanks, that -- that's a good  
25 question. The intent is to have tables set up around the room

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1 and each agency, we're going to make you up a little banner  
2 that -- that identifies your -- your agency and then it's up  
3 to you as to what materials you want to bring, what -- what  
4 information you feel would be relevant. I -- I think, you  
5 know, Steve, you having just been there, you know sort of what  
6 -- what kinds of information the public might ask for. I  
7 would hope that -- that if there's information that you and  
8 EPA can bring to perhaps the same table because of the  
9 wetlands planning component of Ketchikan 2020, I think there's  
10 going to be questions about that and -- and what is this  
11 planning process that the Borough is embarking on. That's --  
12 that's the kind of information. So each agency that comes  
13 will have a booth or -- or a table and an opportunity to  
14 provide information from that table.

15 MR. DUNCAN: And the size that we're thinking,  
16 in general about?

17 MS. BROOKS: [Indisc.].

18 MR. DUNCAN: I mean, the reason I'm asking  
19 this is because we have a couple of different displays that  
20 sometimes we've used at the state fair and things like that,  
21 and so and I want -- I don't want to bring something down  
22 there and not be able to use it, I don't want to have to  
23 trudge it all the way down there and not be able to use it or  
24 [indisc.].

25 MS. BROOKS: Yeah, I believe they're standard

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tables like this, yeah.

MR. DUNCAN: Okay, great.

MS. BROOKS: Yeah. Which are approximately  
six by -- six foot ...

MR. DALTON: So maybe six -- six foot long.

MR. DUNCAN: Yeah, four by six, give or take.

MS. BROOKS: Yeah.

MR. DUNCAN: Okay.

MR. DALTON: And -- and that is -- planning  
fair is really an open house. It's intended that people can  
drop in and ask questions of not only the Gravina Access  
Project team, but folks involved with Ketchikan 2020 and these  
other projects, so it's informal and then we -- we project a  
more formal presentation starting at -- at 6:00 p.m. And I  
think -- I think many of the ...

MR. HILL: [Indisc.].

MR. DALTON: Hello?

MR. HILL: Hi, this is John Hill in Ketchikan.

Mark, something that might come up as the agencies are holding  
their open -- hold their open house in -- in this booth  
format, because I can imagine the scenario where individual  
members of the public would be approaching these agencies and  
stating their concerns about the project, either the access  
project or about the different planning projects going on  
here, and, again, stating those concerns directly to agency --

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1 agency personnel. Is this something that they should be  
2 prepared for or do we want to try and redirect these public  
3 comments at the evening session?

4 MR. KEEN: Well, I think -- it's a good  
5 comment John. I think it'll be important that the agencies  
6 get comments or concerns expressed by the public or even  
7 perhaps other agencies, one is that they need to be directed  
8 specifically to the Gravina Access Project, to the team  
9 members that will be there and present at both open houses in  
10 the afternoon as well as in the evening and that to encourage  
11 them to make comments directly to the team or to hold their  
12 comments until the question-answer period following the  
13 presentation.

14 MS. BROOKS: Yeah, and this is -- this is Anne  
15 and I'll just add in, we -- you know, that may not work  
16 perfectly and one of the reasons for our debrief the next day  
17 is, I think we'll summarize what we heard, and so if we missed  
18 anything, I'm sure everyone will share, you know what -- what  
19 additional comment that they heard.

20 MS. MARTHALER: My question -- this is Susan.  
21 When we talked earlier, I thought that there was going to be  
22 some sort of a public comment form that people could pick up  
23 and write their comments down and maybe we could plan to have  
24 some of those at every table so that if this is the right  
25 agency that they're speaking too, maybe they won't have time

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(907) 586-6846

1 to participate later, that they -- their comment won't be  
2 lost.

3 MR. DALTON: Yes, good point and we do have a  
4 comment form prepared, and -- and we'll provide every agency a  
5 batch of those.

6 MS. MARTHALER: And then just speaking on the  
7 debriefing, what we will do is get everybody a copy of all the  
8 comments and then that way, depending upon what your agency's  
9 focus is, you'll know what the public is saying.

10 MR. DALTON: That's good. Any other comments,  
11 questions? It's -- it's awfully quiet. Well, hearing none, I  
12 want to thank everybody for attending today. This has been  
13 real helpful to us and we look forward to getting your  
14 comments and -- and working closely with you on this project.  
15 We know the Borough's excited about it and -- and we're  
16 excited too to work with them. Anything else?

17 MR. SHAY: Keep up the good work.

18 MR. DALTON: Thanks much, take care.

19 [Off Record]

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(907) 586-6846

C E R T I F I C A T E

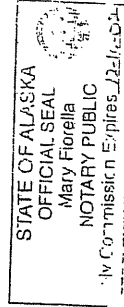
STATE OF ALASKA )  
FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT ) ss.

I, MARY FIORELLA, a Notary Public, duly commissioned and qualified in and for the State of Alaska, do hereby certify that the foregoing transcript of the Gravina Access Project Agency Scoping Meeting held on September 27, 1999, was recorded by persons unknown to me and reduced to typewriting by me or someone under my direction.

I further certify that the transcript consisting of pages 1 to 53, both inclusive, is a full, true and correct transcript of the excerpt requested.

I further certify that I am not a relative or employee of any of the parties, nor financially interested in the action.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my notarial seal this 22nd day of October, 1999.



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(907) 586-6846

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MR. DALTON: Yes, good point and we do have a comment form prepared, and -- and we'll provide every agency a batch of those.

MS. MARTHALER: And then just speaking on the debriefing, what we will do is get everybody a copy of all the comments and then that way, depending upon what your agency's focus is, you'll know what the public is saying.

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MR. SHAY: Keep up the good work.

MR. DALTON: Thanks much, take care.

[Off Record]

Alaska Business Exchange  
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C E R T I F I C A T E

STATE OF ALASKA )  
FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT ) ss.

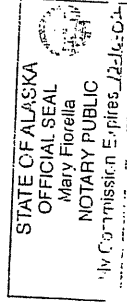
I, MARY FIORELLA, a Notary Public, duly commissioned and qualified in and for the State of Alaska, do hereby certify that the foregoing transcript of the Gravina Access Project Agency Scoping Meeting held on September 27, 1999, was recorded by persons unknown to me and reduced to typewriting by me or someone under my direction.

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IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my notarial seal this 22nd day of October, 1999.

*Mary Fiorella*



Alaska Business Exchange  
326 4th Street, Suite B, JUNEAU, ALASKA 99801  
(907) 586-6846

## Agency Scoping Comments



---

Public scoping comments were received from the following agencies:

### Federal Agencies

Army Corps of Engineers  
EPA – Seattle  
FAA  
NMFS  
US Coast Guard  
USFWS  
USFS

### State Agencies

Fish & Game  
DNR – Alaska Mental Health Trust Land Office  
DNR – Division of Mining Land and Water (telephone contact)  
DNR – Office of History and Archeology (telephone contact)

### Local Government

Ketchikan Gateway Borough





## Summary of Agency Scoping Comments

### *Federal Agencies*

#### **Federal Aviation Administration**

1. A bridge has the potential to significantly impact navigable airspace.
2. The Revilla Corridor (from East Island to Pennock Island at or below 400 feet msl) is heavily used for floatplane and other operators flying under visual flight rules.
3. With enhanced technology and pilot training current approach minima could be lowered in the future but a bridge, depending on its location, may interfere with that.

#### **National Marine Fisheries Service**

1. Concerned about impacts to living marine resources including anadromous fish, marine fish and invertebrates and marine mammals.
2. The Service favors alternatives and designs that minimize direct, indirect and cumulative impacts.
3. Summary of specific resource issues was provided.
4. The Service suggested that additional studies might be necessary to determine impacts of noise to marine mammals and juvenile salmonids and spawning herring.
5. It may be necessary to satisfy consultation requirements of the Endangered Species Act.
6. Essential fish habitat (EFH) requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act should be addressed in NEPA document.

#### **U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Regulatory Branch**

1. Likely need for Section 10 and Section 404 permits.
2. Compensatory mitigation should be considered early in project planning.
3. Further information needs identified:
  - jurisdictional wetlands determinations;
  - identification of direct and indirect impacts from airport expansion, new roads, industrial, residential and other development;
  - bathymetry, currents, wind and weather patterns for each crossing alternative; information concerning aquatic and other natural resources;
  - dive surveys;
  - tidal data.
4. Other issues needing to be addressed include:
  - long term maintenance;
  - storm water;
  - purpose and need for the project;
  - public support for the project;
  - and identification of "appropriate" commercial/industrial development on Gravina.

The Corps reiterated that the permit process will evaluate practicable alternatives.

### **U.S. Coast Guard**

1. Requested that the draft EIS include a separate section on navigational impacts.
2. Provided navigation data prepared by the Marine Safety Detachment in Ketchikan.

### **U.S. Environmental Protection Agency**

1. Purpose and need statement should be concise, easily understandable, and consistent with NEPA with supporting pertinent background information presented in separate section.
2. Fully describe the various planning efforts being undertaken with the Gravina Access Project and their relationship to the access project.
3. Analyze the potential indirect and cumulative environmental impacts associated with the access project itself and those associated with subsequent development on Gravina, (and potentially Pennock and Revilla Islands)
4. Include identification of wetlands types, acreage, and locations, and an assessment of wetland functions and values.
5. Freshwater sources should be evaluated for availability/type and quantity.
6. Effects of development on the hydrologic systems on Gravina and their relationships to water quality and fish habitat should be evaluated.
7. Analysis of impacts to water quality and fish habitat from storm water, wastewater and sewage associated with development should be evaluated.
8. Clarify that funding is secure only for environmental process and design.

### **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**

1. Concern about cumulative and secondary impacts to fish/wildlife resources and habitats.
2. Development should be directed away from the most productive and sensitive habitats. Roads should be sited away from the shoreline and obvious beach fringe.
3. The Service with its dive program can assist with siting of facilities.

### **U.S. Forest Service – Ketchikan Ranger District**

1. How would a hard link tie into the Forest Service road system?
2. How would the road system be affected by increased public access to Gravina?
3. Need for development of recreational sites and trails based on increased access?
4. Wants to ensure that its plans for federal lands are compatible with other Gravina landowners.

### ***State Agencies***

#### **Alaska Department of Fish and Game**

1. Effects of the project on fish and wildlife species, their habitats and the public uses of fish and wildlife.
2. The study should consider direct impacts and secondary and cumulative effects.
3. Field surveys should be conducted for wetlands, uplands, intertidal and sub-tidal habitats and sensitive species of plants, animals or habitats; esp. Alaska worm salamander.
4. The NEPA document should provide an analysis of the cumulative effects of linking Ketchikan to an interconnected road system accessing most of Gravina Island.

5. Methods to avoid impacts should be sought, mitigation described and evaluated and monitoring developed and implemented to ensure the project is properly constructed and provides measures necessary for the protection of water quality and fish and wildlife resources and habitats.

**Department of Natural Resources – Alaska Mental Health Trust Land Office**

1. The Trust supports a hard link which accesses not only the airport but Ketchikan Gateway Borough lands and Trust lands beyond the airport.
2. Development of infrastructure on Gravina would enhance undeveloped Trust lands.

**Department of Natural Resources – Office of History and Archeology**

1. Historic/cultural sites (Native burial sites) on Pennock Island.
2. Construction in this area would not be well received by local Native residents.
3. Native entities which should be contacted include the IRA Councils (Ketchikan Indian Corporation and Village of Saxman IRA Council) and Cape Fox Corporation.

***Local Government***

**Ketchikan Gateway Borough**

1. Concurrent comprehensive planning effort requires close coordination with the GAP.
2. Information needs:
  - an updated land use inventory for Gravina and Revillagigedo Islands,
  - updated Borough-wide base maps,
  - system for data retrieval,
  - maintenance and analysis of mapped information,
  - and a contemporary set of scalable, digital aerial photography compatible with the digital mapping system.

Dalton, Mark, 05:52 PM 10/27/99, FW: [Fwd: Gravina access]

---

From: "Dalton, Mark" <mdalton@hdrinc.com>  
To: "Held, Debbie" <dheld@carsondorn.com>  
Subject: FW: [Fwd: Gravina access]  
Date: Wed, 27 Oct 1999 17:52:10 -0500  
X-Mailer: Internet Mail Service (5.5.2448.0)

Please print out the attachment.

Thanks

-----Original Message-----

From: Al Steininger [mailto:Al\_Steininger@dot.state.ak.us]  
Sent: Tuesday, October 26, 1999 11:30 AM  
To: Dalton, Mark  
Subject: [Fwd: Gravina access]

Message-ID: <6CEA1754C92DD311B7EE08002BB233FE213157@POAMAIL01>  
From: "Duncan, Charlie S POA02" <Charlie.S.Duncan@poa02.usace.army.mil>  
To: "al\_steininger@dot.state.ak.us" <al\_steininger@dot.state.ak.us>  
Cc: "Dalton, Mark" <mdalton@hdrinc.com>  
Subject: Gravina access  
Date: Mon, 25 Oct 1999 14:55:43 -0500  
MIME-Version: 1.0  
X-Mailer: Internet Mail Service (5.5.2448.0)  
Content-Type: text/plain;  
charset="ISO-8859-1"

These comments are submitted as requested in response to September and October 1999, scoping for the proposed Gravina access project.

Based on information provided, the proximity of the project to Tongass Narrows and knowledge of Gravina Island, Ketchikan and other subject areas, it appears that activities discussed, could impact wetlands and other waters subject to Corps of Engineers regulatory jurisdiction.

The proposed project was evaluated pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act and Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors act of 1899. Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 requires that a DA permit be obtained for certain structures or work in or affecting navigable waters of the United States (U.S.), prior to conducting the work (33 U.S.C. 403). Section 404 of the Clean Water Act requires that a DA permit be obtained for the placement or discharge of dredged and/or fill material into waters of the U.S., including wetlands, prior to conducting the work (33 U.S.C. 1344).

For regulatory purposes, the Corps of Engineers defines wetlands as those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Navigable waters of the U.S. are those waters subject to the ebb and flow of the tide shoreward to the mean high water mark, and/or other waters identified as navigable by the Alaska District.

Please be advised that land clearing operations involving vegetation removal with mechanized equipment such as front-end loaders, backhoes, or bulldozers with sheer blades, rakes, or discs in wetlands; or windrowing of vegetation, land leveling or other soil disturbances are considered placement of fill material under our jurisdiction.

The following comments are offered both as they relate specifically to the DA permitting process and as general comments on issues that may need to be addressed:

1. What is the purpose and need for the project? What will the proposed "Hard-link" really do for Ketchikan?

2. Accurate identification of property owners and property boundaries.
3. How and when do you plan to identify potential alternatives?
4. The DA 404 permitting process requires that project planning is sequenced to avoid impacts to the aquatic ecosystem wherever possible, minimize all impacts to aquatic ecosystems, and that compensatory mitigation be accomplished for certain unavoidable impacts. It is likely that a project of this magnitude will require compensatory mitigation. Although compensatory mitigation cannot be used to alter or bypass the avoidance and minimization requirements, you may wish to consider mitigation opportunities during the projects early planning stages as it may save time later when time is at more of a premium.
5. NWI maps alone are not adequate for project specific wetlands identification purposes. Jurisdictional determinations for DA permits must be conducted in accordance with the COE 1987 Wetlands Delineation Manual.
6. Identify and address direct and indirect, concurrent and future impacts, such as airport expansion, new roads, industrial, residential and other development, and how these impacts will occur and be offset when necessary.
7. Information needs to be provided concerning, bathymetry, currents, wind and weather patterns for the area in general and site specific for all alternative crossings as well as approaches and roads being constructed or proposed.
8. Up to date, accurate, quantitative and qualitative information needs to be provided concerning aquatic and other natural resources, including freshwater and marine habitat types, vegetation, and animals. Information should be provided for the area as a whole and site specific for all alternative crossings as well as approaches and roads being constructed or proposed. Dive surveys would be appropriate for marine areas.
9. Address the issue of maintenance after construction, including the associated impacts of maintenance.
10. How will stormwater issues be identified and addressed?
11. Your Project Development Plan, Newsletter and other distributed information indicates broad local support for the proposed link. This was not apparent from the information provided and the meetings attended. How much of the community really supports the project and how do you know this?
12. What are the "appropriate" commercial and industrial developments mentioned in your previous communications that the link would allow to occur on Gravina Island?
13. Provide a summary of each of the previous studies, EIS's, etc.
14. Provide current, updated tidal data, including Mean High Water and High Tide elevations.
15. Could the resources that are and would be expended for a hard link, including the associated studies, be better utilized and pay greater dividends to the community if expended on other local needs and projects? Are there more appropriate options, given the nature & character of the community as well as the existing resources, including local talents, abilities, expertise, existing industries, facilities, etc.?

Impacts to waters of the U.S. should be a major consideration during your review of alternatives with regard to those project components which would require authorization under Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 or Section 404 of the Clean Water Act authorization. For wetland development proposals requiring Corps authorization, Corps permits are

available only for projects which clearly demonstrate compliance with the Clean Water Act Section 404(b)(1) guidelines, which state that no discharge of dredged or fill material shall be permitted if there is a practicable alternative to the proposed discharge which would have less adverse impact on the aquatic ecosystem, as long as the alternative does not have other significant adverse environmental consequences. In those cases where a non water-dependent activity associated with a discharge is proposed for a "special aquatic site", such as wetlands, practicable alternatives are presumed to exist unless clearly demonstrated otherwise. An alternative is considered practicable if it is available and capable of being accomplished after taking into consideration costs, existing technology and logistics in light of overall project purpose.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide comments on this project. We are available for further discussion or clarification of our comments, as necessary. Please contact me by letter at U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Regulatory Branch, PO Box 898, Anchorage, AK 99506; via e-mail or by telephone at (907) 753-2720, toll free in Alaska at (800) 478-2712, if you have any questions concerning our requirements.

Steve Duncan

**Dalton, Mark, 01:27 PM 11/1/99 , FW: Gravina Access Scoping Com**

---

From: "Dalton, Mark" <mdalton@hdrinc.com>  
To: "'Held, Debbie'" <dheld@carsondorn.com>  
Subject: FW: Gravina Access Scoping Comments  
Date: Mon, 1 Nov 1999 13:27:04 -0600  
X-Mailer: Internet Mail Service (5.5.2448.0)

Please print for the scoping summary report.

Thanks.

-----Original Message-----

From: Ryan.William@epamail.epa.gov [mailto:Ryan.William@epamail.epa.gov]

Sent: Monday, November 01, 1999 9:24 AM  
To: mdalton@hdrinc.com  
Subject: Gravina Access Scoping Comments

Mark-

I tried to FAX you this letter on Friday, but it didn't make it. Hopefully this will work.

-Bill

---

October 29, 1999

Reply To  
Attn Of: ECO-088

Ref: 99-009-FHA

Al Steininger  
Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities  
Southeast Region - Design  
6860 Glacier Highway  
Juneau, Alaska 99801-7999

Jim Bryson  
Federal Highway Administration  
P.O. Box 21648  
Juneau, Alaska 99802-1648

Dear Mr. Steininger and Mr. Bryson:

I am writing in response to your recent request for formal written scoping comments related to the preparation of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the proposed Gravina Island Access Project. We are commenting in accordance with our responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act. Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments at this early stage of the project/EIS development process.

Section 309 of the Clean Air Act specifically directs the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to review and comment in writing on the environmental impacts associated with all major federal actions. Under our Section 309 authority, our review of the draft EIS prepared for the proposed access project will consider not only the expected environmental impacts of the project, but also the adequacy of the EIS in meeting the public disclosure requirements

of  
NEPA. The scoping comments that follow are provided to apprise the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) and the Federal Highway Administration of issues that EPA believes to be significant and warrant explicit treatment in the EIS. In providing these comments, which are based on our review of the Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS and other materials, it is our goal to have these issues addressed in the draft EIS. We have enclosed a copy of EPA's Section 309 Review: The Clean Air Act and NEPA which provides further elaboration on our EIS review responsibility.

We would like to take this opportunity to highlight the topics related to this project that EPA believes warrant explicit treatment and discussion in the EIS.

Purpose and Need - We believe that the Purpose and Need statement should be concise and easily understandable, consistent with the implementing regulations for the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) which states that the purpose and need statement, "shall briefly specify the underlying purpose and need to which the agency is responding..." (see 40 CFR 1502.13). It should be short and clear--preferably 1 to 2 sentences, and certainly not more than a paragraph. Purpose and Need statements that are pages long serve to cloud the statement, leaving readers unclear as to the actual need. The real needs should be stated, and the purpose should be simply to meet the needs without compromising the competing needs or sideboards (non-transportation needs). The purpose and need should not prescribe the solution or excessively narrow options; rather it should enable the generation of a full range of alternatives to meet the stated need. Additionally, we recommend that all pertinent background information be placed in a separate "background" section, either preceding or following the Purpose and Need statement. This section should include, in addition to a discussion of the transportation issues, a balanced characterization of competing needs/sideboards that would also need to be met in the development of a solution to the current transportation problem.

Relationship to Other Planning Efforts - We are pleased to see that the proposed access project/EIS is being developed in conjunction with land use planning efforts within the Borough and on Gravina Island. We believe that the integration of land use planning, transportation planning, and environmental review processes is critical in determining long-term land use and transportation goals that are protective of the environment. We are particularly hopeful that the comprehensive planning and the access planning efforts will conclude concurrently to ensure that the ultimate solutions to those efforts truly are integrated with each other. Because the purpose of the EIS is to support the decision making related only to accessing Gravina Island, however, we believe that it is critically important that the EIS fully describe the various planning efforts that are taking place concurrently with the access



planning process, the relationship of those efforts to the access project, the specific decisions that will come out of each effort, and the timing of the different decisions. This type of information will provide the public with an understanding of how the various decision making processes are intended to fit together? and allow them to provide meaningful input related to the desired goal of reaching an integrated land use/transportation decision.

Indirect and Cumulative Effects - Because the access project would be inextricably linked to any development activities on Gravina Island (and potentially Pennock and Revilla Islands), the potential environmental consequences of such development must be analyzed in the EIS, pursuant to NEPA (see 40 CFR 1502.16). In developing the indirect and cumulative effects analyses, we recommend that ADOT&PF develop reasonably foreseeable development scenarios, consistent with the related land use planning efforts and the access options under consideration. These scenarios should be used as the bases for the analyses that will provide the public and the decision maker with an understanding of the potential environmental (and other) consequences associated with the different access options. The EIS must evaluate and disclose all activities (and related impacts) associated with the development scenarios selected, not just those that would require permits. Evaluation of development and its associated impacts should not be restricted to Gravina Island if it would take place elsewhere. Additionally, we recommend that the Council on Environmental Quality's guidance document Considering Cumulative Effects under the National Environmental Policy Act be consulted in developing the EIS as it provides a solid framework for evaluating cumulative effects.

EPA has recently issued internal guidance on how we are to consider the treatment of cumulative effects in our review of NEPA documents. In summary, when reviewing the cumulative effects analysis for the Gravina Island Access Project, we will be looking for the following five basic components in the EIS:

1. Identification of resources that are expected to be cumulatively impacted.
2. Definition of the appropriate spatial and temporal scales for evaluating cumulative impacts. Different resources will likely require evaluation using differing spatial and temporal scales.
3. Identification of all past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions that contribute to cumulative effects on a resource of concern.
4. Identification of appropriate benchmark/baseline conditions for each resource of concern.
5. Identification of technically defensible thresholds to define the significance of impacts. In the absence of specific thresholds, the EIS should describe whether or not a resource is significantly affected, and how that determination was made.

Wetlands - In order for the public and decision maker to determine potential significant direct, indirect and cumulative impacts to waters of the United States, including wetlands, the draft EIS should include an identification of wetland types, acreage, and locations, and an assessment of wetland functions

and values. This information should be provided for impacts associated with the access project itself and those associated with subsequent development. All construction activities should avoid high resource wetlands to the maximum extent practicable. All unavoidable wetland impacts should be minimized by strict implementation of Best Management Practices (BMPs). The EIS should specifically identify the BMPs proposed to be implemented and include a monitoring plan designed to ensure their effectiveness.

Stormwater, Fresh Water Sources, and Wastewater/Sewage Treatment - The EIS should provide a thorough evaluation of the availability/type and quantity of fresh water needed to support development on Gravina Island and the implications of its use on water quality and fish habitat. The EIS should also evaluate the effects of development on the hydrologic systems on Gravina and their relationships to water quality and fish habitat. The EIS should also provide an analysis of how stormwater, wastewater and sewage associated with development would impact water quality and fish habitat.

Funding and Schedules - We believe that it is very important that the EIS provide the public and the decision maker with a clear understanding of how the funding authorized for the access project in TEA-21 is to be used. It is our understanding that the current funding is to cover environmental review and design, but does not cover construction of any solution. This should be made clear in the EIS so that the public understands that the implementation of any build solution would require the acquisition of additional funding beyond what is presently available. A discussion of potential funding sources for implementation (construction, operation, and maintenance) of the access decision should also be included in the EIS. Additionally, we recommend that any presentations in the EIS related to construction schedules clearly reflect that timing of construction of any solution is contingent on the availability of funding. We find that the schedule provided in the scoping information is misleading because it suggests that construction will begin in June 2002 and be completed in the Spring of 2005. We do not believe that these dates should be presented in such a definitive manner, as funding for construction is presently not available.

Thank you for providing this opportunity for early involvement in this project. Should you have any questions about our comments, please feel free to contact Bill Ryan at (206) 553-8561.

Sincerely,

/s/

Richard B. Parkin, Manager  
Geographic Implementation Unit

cc: M. Dalton, HDR

Enclosure

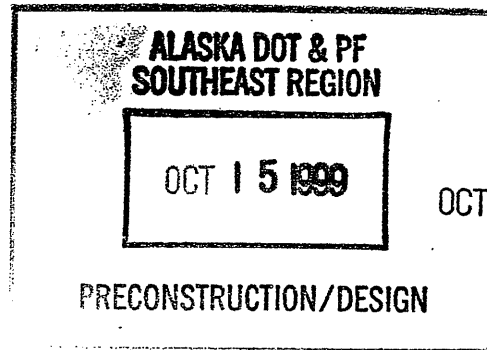


U.S. Department  
of Transportation  
**Federal Aviation  
Administration**

Alaskan Region  
Air Traffic Division

222 W. 7th Avenue, #14  
Anchorage, AK 99513-7587  
Phone: (907)271-5464  
Fax: (907)271-2850

Al Steininger, P. E.  
State of Alaska, DOT & PF  
Southeastern Region  
6860 Glacier Highway  
Juneau, AK



Dear Mr. Al Steininger:

The Federal Aviation Administration was represented at the September 27 scoping meeting for the Gravina Access Project. We expressed our primary concerns at the meeting and this letter is in response to your request for the FAA to provide formal written comments expressing those concerns. The bridge option is the only option that has the potential to significantly impact navigable airspace. Although the impacts are difficult to assess without details on the bridge location and specifications, we offer the following comments for your consideration.

Any future expansion near the present airport should consider protected surfaces under FAR Part 77, Objects Affecting Navigable Airspace, along with those trapezoid features associated with precision approach criteria for future Required Navigational Performance (RNP) procedures (FAA Order 8260-36A). This will ensure that we are able to obtain the lowest approach minima possible. We envision that Alaska Airlines, and possibly others, will want to employ the latest technology consistent with terrain features and void of any man-made objects that would otherwise prohibit the FAA from obtaining the lowest approach minima possible.

We currently have precision approaches down to 0.15 RNP with minima at 575 feet and 3/4 mile visibility on both runways. This will change in the future to lower minima with enhanced technology and pilot training, notwithstanding obstacles. We anticipate future enhancements on both ends of the runway that would allow minima down to 200 feet and 1/2 mile visibility or lower. A bridge, depending on the location, could prohibit this achievement.

The Revilla Corridor is heavily used by floatplane and other operators flying under visual flight rules. Additionally, Anchorage Air Route Traffic Control Center maintains a Letter of Agreement with Ketchikan Flight Service Station and specified air taxi and commercial operators to provide procedures for Special VFR flight and IFR operations in the Revilla Corridor. The corridor extends roughly along the Tongass Narrows from East Island to Pennock Island at and below 400 feet mean sea level. The construction of a bridge across the Narrows, depending on the location, would likely have a significant impact on the use of this corridor.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the Gravina Island Project. If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact James Garoutte of the Flight Standards Division at 271-5405, or Clarence Goward of the Air Traffic Division at 271-5883.

Sincerely,



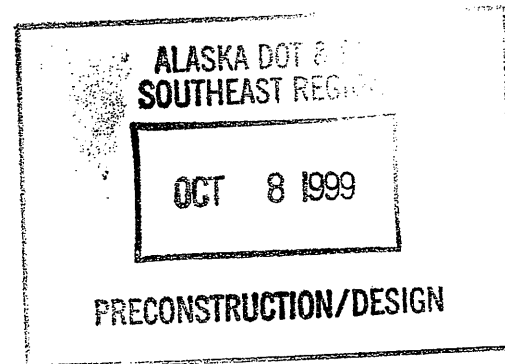
Anthony M. Wylie

Manager, Operations Branch, AAL-  
530



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
National Marine Fisheries Service  
P.O. Box 21668  
Juneau, Alaska 99802-1668

October 13, 1999



Al Steininger, P.E.  
Project Manager  
State of Alaska  
Department of Transportation  
and Public Facilities  
Design and Engineering Services Division  
Southeast Region - Design  
6860 Glacier Highway  
Juneau, Alaska 99801-7999

RE: Gravina Access Project - Agency Scoping Comments

Dear Mr. Steininger:

Thank you for soliciting scoping comments on the referenced project. The purpose of the project is to provide better access between the Ketchikan airport and the city of Ketchikan. Alternatives were discussed at the September 27 scoping meeting held in Juneau and include enhanced ferry service, an underground tunnel, and a bridge, the location of which will be considered at a number of locations. The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) has the responsibility to comment on impacts to living marine resources under our jurisdiction including anadromous fish, marine fish and invertebrates and marine mammals. Accordingly, we would favor those project alternatives and designs that minimize direct, indirect and cumulative impacts to anadromous fish streams, wetlands, intertidal areas, submerged aquatic vegetation, marine habitats, and the relevant species using them.

Mark Dalton of HDR consulting has met separately with Steve Brockmann of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Jack Gustafson of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, and provided us with a summary of resource issues provided at that meeting. Of the issues listed, the NMFS is also concerned with numbers 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 16, 17, 19, 20, and 24. Rather than re-state these issues, we are providing additional comment as follows.



Of the issues listed above, numbers 4, 5 and 6 address the presence of marine mammals in Tongass Narrows and suggest that additional studies may be necessary. We concur with this recommendation, as any in-water work that generates underwater noise will need to be evaluated for its potential to disturb marine mammals that may be present (as well as migrating juvenile salmonids and spawning herring). Enclosed is a draft copy of a report for the marine mammal observation program implemented aboard some of the ferries of the Alaska Marine Highway System. Sightings collected through this program show humpback whale, killer whale and Pacific white-sided dolphin sightings in the northern area of Tongass Narrows, and/or the confluence of Tongass Narrows, Clarence Strait and Behm Canal. The humpback whale and Steller sea lion are listed as endangered and threatened species, respectively. Depending on the magnitude of impact to these species, it may be necessary to satisfy consultation requirements of the Endangered Species Act with the responsible Federal agency, the Federal Highway Administration.

The environmental impact statement (EIS) for the project will need to address the essential fish habitat (EFH) requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSFCMA). The EIS should include an assessment of the impacts of the proposed action on EFH in a chapter or section titled "Essential Fish Habitat". The EFH assessment should include 1) a description of the proposed action; 2) an analysis of individual and cumulative effects of the action on EFH, the managed species, and associated species such as major prey species, including affected life history stages; 3) the responsible Federal agency's views regarding the effects of the action on EFH; and 4) a discussion of any proposed mitigation, if applicable.

Upon receipt of the EFH assessment, NMFS will provide back to the Federal agency or their representative, any EFH conservation recommendations, as appropriate, if we believe the project would adversely affect EFH. In order to develop these conservation recommendations, whenever possible, at least 60 days notice prior to a final decision on an action, or 90 days if the action would result in a substantial adverse impact to EFH. Upon receipt of NMFS conservation recommendations, the Federal agency is required to respond in writing to NMFS within 30 days.

#### **EFH Assessment Information:**

To assist you in developing an EFH assessment, we have identified EFH in the general vicinity of the current ferry between the airport and the city of Ketchikan. This list would need to be verified for specific project sites, but is likely to be similar, if not identical. Specific information on habitat for salmon should be obtained from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game

and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Ketchikan. EFH for all five species of Pacific salmon (chinook, coho, chum sockeye, pink) is present in the project area.

Following are habitat characteristics for the non-salmonid species of EFH. References to habitat locations indicate the following depth associations; inner (1-50 meters) and middle (50-100 meters) and outer (100-200 meters) shelf regions and upper (200-1000m) and lower (>1000m) slopes and basin (>3000m).

#### Pacific Ocean Perch Adults and Late Juveniles:

Adults found in outer shelf and upper slope. Juveniles found in inner, middle, and outer shelves, and upper slope. Larval stages found in same as juveniles plus lower slope and basin. Adult substrates are gravel, pebble, and cobble, juvenile substrates are the same as adults plus boulders.

#### Yelloweye Rockfish Adults and Late Juveniles:

Adults and juveniles are both found in the middle and outer shelves and upper slope. Habitat for both is bays, estuaries, and island passes. Both life stages are demersal. Found in substrate areas of rock, coral and cobble. High concentrations are found associated with high relief containing refuge spaces such as overhangs, crevices and caves. Feeding areas are those containing fish, shrimp and crab.

#### Shortraker and Rougheye Rockfish Adults and late Juveniles:

Adults occur in outer shelf and upper slope, in depths from 25 to 875 m and are semi-demersal. Juveniles are found in the middle and outer shelves. Adults found over all substrates including mud, clay, silt, sand, gravel, pebble, cobble, boulder and bedrock. However, from submersible observations, soft substrates of sand or mud usually had the highest densities; whereas hard substrates of bedrock, cobble or pebble usually had the lowest adult densities. Habitats with steep slopes and frequent boulders were used at a higher rate than habitats with gradual slopes and few boulders. It is suspected that juveniles occupy shallower habitats than adults.

#### Dusky Rockfish Adults and Late Juveniles:

Adults found in outer shelf, upper slope and nearshore waters of Southeast Alaska along rocky shores at depths less than 50m. Juveniles found in inner (1-50m) and middle (50-100m) slopes. Substrates for adults and juveniles is gravel, cobble, boulder. Juvenile dusky rockfish have also been captured in nearshore eelgrass and kelp beds. Adults are semi-demersal/semi-pelagic.

#### Walleye Pollock Adults and Eggs:

Both adults and eggs occur in outer shelf. Walleye pollock and their eggs are pelagic, therefore they may occur in waters over any substrate.

#### Sablefish Adults and Late Juveniles:

Adults and late juveniles occur in the upper and lower slopes. Adult and late juvenile sablefish are pelagic and may occur in waters over any substrate.

#### Pacific Cod Adults and Late Juveniles:

Occur in both inner and middle shelf regions. Both life stages are demersal. Adults occur from the shoreline to 500m, juveniles from 60-150m. Preferred substrate is soft sediment, from mud and clay to sand.

#### Arrowtooth Flounder Adults and Late Juveniles:

Occur in both inner and middle shelf regions. Both life stages are demersal. Juveniles inhabit shallow areas until about 10 cm in length. Widespread distribution mainly on middle and out portions of shelf. Wintertime migration to shelf margin and upper continental slope to avoid cold temperatures.

#### Sculpin spp. Adults and Late Juveniles:

Occur in both inner and middle shelf regions. Both life stages are demersal. Broad range of habitats from intertidal pools, and all shelf substrates (mud, sand, gravel, etc.).

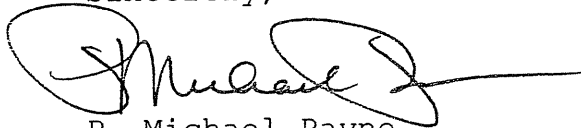
#### Skates spp. Adults and Late Juveniles:

Occur in middle shelf regions. Both life stages are demersal. Broad range of substrate types (mud, sand, gravel, and rock) and the lower portion of the water column.



Thank you for the opportunity to comment. We look forward to continued coordination for this project. If you have any further concerns or questions please contact Linda Shaw at (907) 586-7510.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "P. Michael Payne", with a large, stylized loop at the end.

P. Michael Payne  
Assistant Regional  
Administrator  
for Habitat Conservation

cc: EPA Anchorage (Mark Jen)  
ADEC, AADGC, ADNR, Juneau  
ADF&G, USFWS, Ketchikan

U.S. Department  
of Transportation

United States  
Coast Guard



Commander  
Seventeenth Coast Guard District

P.O. Box 25517  
Juneau, Alaska 99802  
Staff Symbol: (mon)  
Phone: (907) 463-2268  
FAX: (907) 463-2273

16590  
3/26/99

Michael L. Downing, P.E.  
Director, Statewide Design & Engineering  
Services Division  
Alaska Department of Transportation  
and Public Facilities  
3132 Channel Drive  
Juneau, Alaska 99801-7898

RECEIVED

APR 01 1999

Stwd. Design & Eng. Svcs  
Director's Office

Dear Mr. Downing:

The Coast Guard accepts your invitation to participate as a Cooperating Agency in the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Ketchikan-Gravina Island Bridge project. It is my understanding that the proposal involves the spanning of Tongass Narrows to connect the City of Ketchikan with the Ketchikan International airport located on Gravina Island.

We request that the EIS contain a separate section discussing navigational impacts of your proposal. Enclosed is a listing of questions that once answered should assist you in describing present and prospective navigation of the entire waterway as well as for the reach through each of the bridge sites. The answers to the questions should also help you determine the impacts of the bridges as well as navigational impacts during construction. As I stated in a recent telephone conversation, a public hearing is highly encouraged in the very near future to solicit additional information on navigational issues by the users themselves. It is my understanding that you are in the process of hiring a consultant to handle these types of events.

The Coast Guard issued a Public Notice dated July 21, 1993 soliciting comments on the navigational clearances needed to safely accommodate existing as well as potential users of the waterway. Several cruise ship operators responded at that time that the trend in their industry indicated larger ships and that proposed bridges should be high enough to accommodate them. In addition concerns were raised by the operators of the Alaska Marine Highway system about the increased congestion in the east channel if your plans involve closing the west channel to most commercial traffic. Recent information indicates that a cruise ship with a 208' height plans to use this waterway in the very near future. Our office plans to issue another Public Notice to confirm this as well as acquire up-to-date information on the type, size, and clearances required by the various vessels that may be impacted by your proposed bridges.

I have enclosed navigational data forwarded by our Marine Safety Detachment located in Ketchikan, that may be helpful. They are part of an organization of vessel operators who recently developed operating guidelines for vessels operating on Tongass Narrows in an effort to enhance the safety of navigation on this congested waterway.

I look forward to assisting you in gathering additional information concerning impacts to navigation associated with this important project. If you have any questions, please contact me at 463-2268.

Sincerely,



J. N. HELFINSTINE  
Chief, Bridge Section, Waterways  
Management & Navigation Safety Branch  
U. S. Coast Guard  
By direction of the Commander

Enclosure: (1) Navigational Evaluation  
(2) Marine Safety Detachment Ketchikan ltr dated 03/08/99  
(3) Waterway User Guide  
(4) Tongass Narrows Voluntary Waterway Guide  
(5) General Operating Guidelines for all Vessels Operating on Tongass Narrows

## NAVIGATIONAL EVALUATION.

*Give reasons to support each answer. Describe present and prospective navigation of the entire waterway and for the reach through the bridge site.*

1. Do vessels engaged in emergency operations (i.e. law enforcement, fire, rescue, emergency dam repair, etc.), national defense activities (i.e., cruisers, fuel barges, munitions ships, etc.) or channel maintenance (i.e., dredges, dam and levee repair, etc.) operate on the waterway? If yes, describe the vessels and provide the following information.

a. Will the proposed bridge provide the horizontal and vertical clearances for the safe, efficient passage of the largest of these vessels? Why?

b. If no, estimate the number of vessels in each of the above categories unable to pass the proposed bridge. Give the name, length overall (LOA), beam, draft, height of highest fixed point above the waterline for vessels affected by the bridge.

c. Can these vessels be modified (i.e., folding mast, relocation of equipment, etc.) without decreasing their respective response times? If so, name the vessels.

d. If modifications are feasible, name the vessels, state the necessary modifications, the cost of modifying each, and who will pay for the modifications (i.e., vessel owner, applicant, other).

2. Describe the present and prospective recreational navigation. Will the proposed bridge affect the safe, efficient movement of any segment of the present or prospective recreational fleet operation on the waterway? If yes, provide the following information:

a. State the number of and describe the vessels which may be affected by the proposed bridge. Provide the LOA, beam, draft, and height of the highest fixed point above the waterline of each affected vessel. Estimate this percentage of the recreational fleet which may be affected by the proposed bridge.

b. Will the proposed bridge eliminate the access of these vessels to existing or planned commercial, water-oriented facilities (i.e., restaurants, shops, recreational areas, marinas, etc.) in the vicinity of the proposed bridge. Describe these facilities.

c. If yes, discuss the economic impacts the restriction will have on existing or planned commercial, water-oriented facilities.

d. It is feasible to modify the affected segments of the fleet to clear the proposed bridge without substantially increasing operating costs? If yes, name the vessels, state

the necessary modifications, cost of modifying each vessel and person or entity responsible for financing the modifications.

***Note: Check with local Corps of Engineers district office, chamber of commerce or other organizations of proposed marinas, recreational areas, shops, etc.***

3. Describe the present and prospective commercial navigation and the cargoes moved on the waterway. Will the proposed bridge affect the safe, efficient movement of any segment of the present or prospective commercial fleet operating on the waterway? If yes, provide the following information:

a. State the number of and describe the vessels which may be affected by the proposed bridge. Provide the LOA, beam, draft, and height of the highest fixed point above the waterline for each of these vessels. Estimate this percentage of the commercial fleet which may be affected by the proposed bridge.

b. Discuss the economic impacts the restriction will have on local commercial shipping.

c. Describe any existing or planned commercial or industrial developments (i.e., manufacturing, refining, etc., facilities) and other businesses affected by this restriction, and discuss the economic impacts the restriction will have on each business.

d. Is it feasible to modify the restricted vessels to clear the proposed bridge without substantially increasing operating costs? If yes, name the vessels, state the necessary modifications, cost of modifying each vessel and company or entity responsible for financing the modifications.

4. Will the proposed bridge block access of any vessel presently using local service facilities (i.e., repair shops, parts distributors, fuel stations)? If yes, provide the following information:

a. Describe the facilities and estimate the number of vessels currently using these facilities.

b. Provide the following specifications of vessels which will be forced to seek alternate facilities: name, LOA, beam drift, height of the highest fixed point above the waterline.

c. What economic impact will loss of access have on these facilities?

d. What is the distance to alternate service facilities capable of servicing thee affected vessels? Describe the facilities.

- e. Will use of these alternate facilities substantially increase vessel operations costs or down time?
- f. Is it feasible to modify the affected vessels to clear the proposed bridge?
- g. If yes, state the name, necessary modifications, cost of modifying each vessel and who will pay for the modifications.

5. Are alternate routes by passing the proposed bridge available for use by vessels unable to pass the proposed bridge? If yes, provide the following information:

- a. State the number of vessels which will be forced to use alternate routes.
- b. Describe those vessels by listing the name, LOA, beam, draft, height of the highest fixed point above the waterline for each.
- c. Identify any alternate routes and provide the respective distances between the proposed bridge and these routes.
- d. Will use of these routes substantially increase the transit time and/or operating costs of the affected vessels?
- e. If yes, describe the impacts of increased transit time and/or operating costs.
- f. Is it feasible to modify these vessels to clear the proposed bridge?
- g. If yes, state the name, necessary modifications, cost of modifying each vessel and who will pay for these modifications.

6. Will the bridge prohibit the entry of any vessels to the local harbor of refuge? If yes, describe the harbor and provide the following information:

- a. What percentage of vessels currently using the harbor refuge will not be able to pass the proposed bridge to gain access to that refuge? Describe the vessels.
- b. State the number of vessels, name, LOA, beam, draft, and height of the highest fixed point above the waterline for those vessels whose access to the refuge is prohibited by the proposed bridge.
- c. Is it feasible to modify these vessels to clear the proposed bridge?
- d. If yes, state the name, necessary modifications, cost of modifying each vessel and who will pay for the modifications.

e. If alternate refuges are available, describe them and state the distance of each from the present harbor of refuge.

***NOTE: A harbor of refuge is defined as a naturally or artificially protected water area that provides a place of relative safety or refuge for commercial and recreational vessels travelling along the coast or operating in a region.***

7. Will the proposed bridge be located within one-half mile of a bend in a waterway? If yes, describe the bend and provide the following information:

a. Is there sufficient distance between the bridge and the bend to allow proper vessel alignment of the safe, efficient passage of vessels through the proposed bridge?

b. If no, what factors make construction of the bridge at an alternate location impractical?

8. Are there other factors (i.e., dockage's, lightering area, existing bridges, etc.) located within one-half mile of the proposed bridge which would create hazardous passage through the proposed structure? If yes, provide the following information:

a. Describe the factors:

b. What mitigative measures do you recommend? Why?

9. Do local hydrologic conditions (i.e., wave chop, cross currents, tides, shoals, etc.) increase the hazard of passage through the proposed bridge? If yes, provide the following information:

a. Describe conditions:

b. What mitigative measures do you recommend? Why?

10. Do local atmospheric conditions (i.e., strong, prevailing winds, fog, rapidly developing storms, etc.) increase the hazard of passage through the proposed bridge? If yes, provide the following information:

a. Describe the conditions:

b. What mitigative measures do you recommend? Why?

11. Have guide clearances been established for the waterway? If yes, provide the following information:

a. Horizontal guidance clearances:

b. Vertical guide clearance:

c. Do the proposed bridge clearances differ from these guide clearances?

d. If yes which of the above factors (1 thru 11) justify deviating from the guide clearances?

12. State any other factors considered necessary for the safe, efficient passage of vessels through the proposed bridge? Why?



U.S. Department  
of Transportation

United States  
Coast Guard



Supervisor  
United States Coast Guard  
Marine Safety Detachment

2030 Sealevel Drive, Suite 203  
Ketchikan, AK 99901  
Staff Symbol: Sup  
Phone: (907) 225-4496  
FAX: (907) 225-4499

11220  
03/08/99

From: Supervisor, Marine Safety Detachment Ketchikan  
To: Commander (mon)  
Seventeenth Coast Guard District  
P.O. Box 25517  
Juneau, AK 99802-5517  
ATTN: Mr. James Helfinstine

Subj: TONGASS NARROWS BRIDGE

As per our phone conversation, I am writing you to express some of the concerns and ideas I have with regards to the proposed bridge over Tongass Narrows. According to the local paper, the leading plan for a bridge over Tongass Narrows, has a bridge going from Wolf Point on Revillagagedo Island to the Airport on Gravina Island. This is a poor location for the bridge from a safety standpoint. In order for the bridge to be effective, it would have to have a clearance of at least 200 feet high at mean high tide, and a width of around 500 feet. With the above mentioned location, this bridge would be in direct conflict with the floatplane operations at the airport, and even more importantly, it could potentially cause problems with a jet approaching the airport from the south going missed approach as the only bail area is over the water. Additionally, the current cruise ships that make port calls to Ketchikan will be increasing in size from 74,000GT to in the area of 124,000GT.

Putting a bridge at this location would also potentially restrict this already narrows portion of the narrows. Ketchikan is currently growing to the North and unfortunately, the narrows is more constricted in this area. From strictly a waterway safety standpoint, as the COTP's representative in Ketchikan, I would have recommend the COTP oppose any project that would further constrict this area of the narrows.

As an outsider looking in, a more appropriate location for the bridge would seem to be a bridge that extends from the vicinity of Saxman over to Pennock Island then north along Pennock Island to the 200'ft peak opposite Clam Cove on Gravina, and then crossing the west channel where the channel necks down at Clam Cove.

The Borough is already looking at options for new boat harbors and a bridge in this area would create two protected areas for such a harbor. Both bridges would still have to be over 200 feet high to provide for the transits of cruise ships and barges. However this location would allow for the development of Pennock Island and Saxman, would be well outside of the operational areas for both floatplanes and jets approaching the airport. This location is outside of the most heavily used portions of Tongass Narrows and would not create a more restricted waterway.

Subj: TONGASS NARROWS BRIDGE

11220  
03/08/99

Regardless of what location is chosen, very careful thought will have to be given to future growth of Tongass Narrows and the vessels that use this body of water.

I can get into more detail on the levels of congestion and so forth but I think you get the picture. When you are in town, please make contact with me so we may discuss this issue more.



PATRICK W. CLARK

Copy: MSO JUNEAU



IN REPLY REFER TO:

## United States Department of the Interior

### FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Southeast Alaska Ecological Services  
3000 Vintage Blvd., Suite 201  
Juneau, Alaska 99801-7100

ALASKA DOT & PF  
SOUTHEAST REGION

OCT 25 1999

PRECONSTRUCTION/DESIGN

Mr. Al Steininger  
Department of Transportation and Public Facilities  
6860 Glacier Highway  
Juneau, AK 99801-7999

Re: Gravina Access Project

Dear Mr. Steininger:

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service participated in an informal scoping meeting on the subject project with Mark Dalton of HDR Alaska, Inc., and Jack Gustafson of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game on September 15, 1999 in Ketchikan. Meeting notes summarizing the issues raised were prepared by Mr. Dalton. The meeting notes are a good indication of the range of issues the Service believes should be addressed. A copy is attached for your reference.

Of greatest concern are the cumulative and secondary impacts associated with providing roaded access to Gravina Island. Development should be directed away from the most productive and sensitive habitats, such as the major estuaries and inland habitats at the heads of Bostwick Inlet and Vallenar Bay. Smaller estuaries, such as at Lewis Reef and the head of Blank Inlet, are closer to any potential road crossings between Revilla and Gravina Islands. These areas also support diverse and very high quality fish and wildlife habitats, and should be protected from the secondary and indirect effects of providing access to Gravina Island.

Roads should stay well back from the shoreline, and inland of any obvious beach fringe forest wherever possible. These habitats are particularly important to a broad diversity of fish and wildlife, and are easily and irretrievably damaged by road construction.

The Service is available to assist you with siting facilities, such as a bridge or tunnel, that must be constructed in the near-shore marine environment. We currently maintain a dive program primarily for this purpose. As alternative locations are identified, it is possible that, with adequate funding, the Service could provide underwater evaluations, with an objective of steering development away from the most productive habitats. Please contact the Juneau Fish and Wildlife Office if you are interested in arranging for diving-related assistance.

If fish-bearing streams will be crossed by project-related roads, we recommend that fish passage

be impaired as little as possible. In general, bridges are preferred over culverts. Where culverts are necessary, they must be carefully designed and installed. Several examples of well-designed and well-installed culverts are located along the nearby Revilla Road\Ward Lake Road project recently completed by the Federal Highway Administration. Desirable features of these culverts include adequate bedding, stable aprons at both ends, holding pools at the lower ends of the pipes, baffling on pipes with more than minimal gradient, and careful placement of large and small rocks in a thalweg pattern within the pipes. Similar culverts should be used on fish streams affected by the proposed project.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide early input. If you have any questions, please contact Steve Brockmann at (907) 225-9691.

Sincerely,



Teresa A. N. Woods  
Field Supervisor

Attachment: Meeting notes of 9/15/99

cc: ADFG, Ketchikan  
NMFS, Juneau  
FWS, Ketchikan



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Forest  
Service

Alaska Region  
Tongass National Forest  
TT/TDD (907) 225-0414

Ketchikan Ranger District  
Misty Fiords National Monument  
3031 Tongass Avenue  
Ketchikan, Alaska 99901  
(907) 225-2148

File Code:

Date: October 12, 1999

Al Steininger  
Project Manager- Gravina Access Project  
State of Alaska - Department of Transportation and Public Utilities  
6800 Glacier Highway  
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Mr. Steininger:

Thank you for including the Forest Service in your agency scoping meetings and public meetings for the Gravina Access Project. We appreciate the opportunity to work with you and adjacent landowners on Gravina Island.

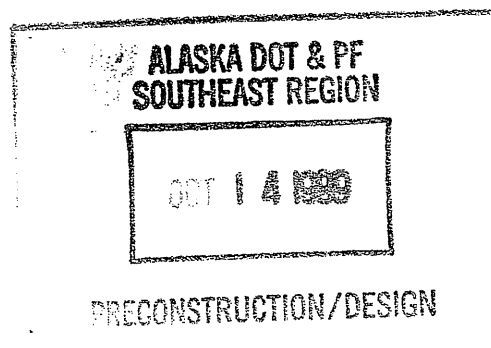
We also feel that it is very important for the Forest Service to continue to be involved in the project development team for the Gravina Access Project so that our plans on federal land will be compatible with those of other landowners on the island.

In general our concerns with the Gravina Access Project center on the issue of access to federal lands if a hard link is established between Ketchikan and Gravina. Some of the questions we will ask are: "How would increased public access to Gravina affect the Forest Service road system?"; "How and where would the Forest Service road system tie into the hard link?"; "Should the Forest Service consider developing recreational sites and trails based on increased access to the island?"

Please continue to keep Susan Marthaller, Gravina Team Leader, informed throughout your planning process. Susan can be reached at (907) 228-4124.

Sincerely,

*J. C. Ingersoll*  
FOR JEREMIAH C. INGERSOLL  
District Ranger



# STATE OF ALASKA

## DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

### HABITAT AND RESTORATION DIVISION SOUTHEAST REGIONAL OFFICE

TONY KNOWLES, GOVERNOR

ISLAND CENTER BUILDING  
P.O. BOX 240020  
DOUGLAS, AK 99824-0020  
PHONE: (907) 465-4290  
FAX: (907) 465-4272

October 27, 1999

Mr. Al Steininger, P.E.  
Alaska Department of Transportation  
6860 Glacier Highway  
Juneau, AK 99801-7999

Re: Gravina Access Project Scoping Comments

Dear Mr. Steininger:

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) submits the following comments for your use regarding the proposed Gravina Island Access Project. No specific design has been selected for evaluation. Issues and concerns we believe should be addressed in the Draft EIS are as follows:

In general, the Draft EIS should identify and analyze the potential effects of this project on fish and wildlife species, their habitats and the public uses of fish and wildlife. The area of concern should include not only on-site impacts, but also those that could be considered secondary and cumulative as a result of the project.

Development activities and their potential impacts to sensitive habitats need to be identified and described. These include, but are not limited to the following:

1. The placement of fill or structures in tidelands, Tongass Narrows, and wetlands.
2. Underwater excavations and dredging.
3. The extent and consequences of construction designs and activities on underwater habitats.
4. The potential constriction of flows within Tongass Narrows. For example, if designs result in an increase in tidal current velocities within Tongass Narrows, how might this affect adult and juvenile salmonid migrations, other fish, marine mammals, waterfowl and birds, and/or other species utilizing the Narrows?
5. Disturbance of bald eagle nest sites. (Identification and protection need to be addressed).
6. Road crossings and other activities within and adjacent to anadromous and resident fish habitat.
7. Land disturbance activities on Gravina Island, including secondary and cumulative effects. For example, how will vehicular access from Ketchikan following the construction of the intra/inter-island road network and other infrastructure affect Sitka black-tailed deer and wolf populations?

Field surveys should be conducted where resource information is inadequate. For example, it appears that more detailed mapping of wetlands, uplands, intertidal, and sub-tidal habitats is necessary within the project area.

When you met with Jack Gustafson in Ketchikan, you also asked if any species that you might be unaware of may be affected by the project. Field surveys would be needed to look for and identify such potentially sensitive species of plants, animals, or habitats since descriptions or references in published literature are likely to be rather limited. For example, this project review should attempt to identify and clarify the potential occurrence of the Alaska worm salamander (Batrachoseps caudatus) in the project area. This species has been mapped as occurring on the northern shore of Annette Island (Norman and Hassler, 1995), but its presence could only be verified through more intensive search efforts (Hodge, 1976).

The occurrence of another amphibian, a variant form of Taricha granulosa (or Triturus granulosus granulosus) should also be examined. Three other populations of this variant are reported in the literature, but are found in the Siskiyou mountain range of northern California and Oregon (Myers, 1942). Boucher first collected a breeding series of this variant on Gravina Island, opposite Ketchikan. These specimens were apparently originally stored in the Natural History Museum at Stanford University and labeled as Nos. 4488-4508. Garber and Garber (1978) recommended attempting to determine if these variants should be granted formal taxonomic recognition or if they warrant a subspecific or specific status, or if the description of Taricha granulosa should be revised to include them. While such taxonomic investigations are beyond the scope of this project, wetlands inhabited by these species should be avoided if possible.

This project is intended to improve transportation between Revilla and Gravina Islands, connect and unify transportation systems under various land ownerships on Gravina Island, and provide an incentive and means for expanding economic development on Gravina. Consequently, an important aspect of the Draft EIS is that it describes and analyzes the potential secondary and cumulative impacts. In particular, all transportation designs and road networks connecting to a bridge or tunnel need to be addressed in a comprehensive analysis that will evaluate the likely outcome of these proposals on fish and wildlife populations inhabiting Gravina Island. Concurrently with this access project to Gravina Island, the Forest Service is planning a large timber sale and island-wide interconnected road network on Gravina. Linking the Forest Service's roading network to new vehicular access provided by the Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (ADOT/PF) project will result in increased effects and cumulative impacts that would not be apparent when the projects are reviewed in isolation of each other. Additional roads are also proposed to be constructed on other land ownerships. Some of these would access proposed State timber sales and subdivisions, and borough or Mental Health Trust lands on Tongass Narrows. The Gravina Access Project Draft EIS needs to provide a clear description and analysis of the future cumulative environmental effects resulting from linking Ketchikan to an interconnected road system accessing most of Gravina Island. The construction of multiple-use travel routes should also be depicted so that the Forest Service and others can plan to obtain U.S. Army Corps of Engineers permits for road construction if their use precludes them from qualifying for the silvicultural exemption.

Along with the identification of anticipated impacts, the Draft EIS should seek practical methods of avoiding impacts that are unnecessary. For impacts that are unavoidable, alternative means of providing for mitigation should be described and evaluated. A monitoring program should be developed and implemented to assure that the project is constructed properly, and that it provides the measures necessary for the protection of water quality and fish and wildlife resources and habitats.

We hope these comments are useful in your development of the NEPA documentation necessary for the completion of this project. We look forward to continuing our coordination regarding the project, and thank you for the opportunity to comment at this time.

Sincerely,

Bill Hanson  
Regional Management Coordinator

Attachment

cc: Jennifer Garland, DGC, Juneau  
Lana Shea Flanders, ADF&G H&R, Douglas  
Reuben Yost, ADOT&PF, Juneau  
John Hill, KGB, Ketchikan  
Bill Ryan, EPA, Seattle  
James Bryson, FHWA, Juneau  
Steve Duncan, COE, Anchorage  
Linda Shaw, NMFS, Juneau  
Theresa Woods, USFWS, Juneau  
Jerry Ingersoll, USFS-KRD, Ketchikan  
Ron Schonenbach, ADNR, Juneau  
Jack Gustafson, ADF&G, Ketchikan  
Scott Kelly, ADF&G CFMD, Douglas  
Rocky Holmes, ADF&G SF, Douglas  
Mike Turek, ADF&G Sub, Douglas  
Bruce Dinneford, ADF&G WC, Douglas



## LITERATURE CITED

- Garber, D.P. and C. E. Garber. 1978. A variant form of Taricha granulosa (amphibia, urodela, salamandridae) from northwestern California. *Journal of Herpetology* 12(1):59-64.
- Hodge, R.P. 1976. Amphibians and reptiles in Alaska, the Yukon, and Northwest Territories. Alaska Northwest Publishing Company. Pg. 56-59.
- Myers, G.S. 1942. Notes on Pacific coast Triturus. *Copeia* 1942(2):77-82.
- Norman, B.R. and T.J. Hassler. 1995. Field investigations of the herpetological taxa in Southeast Alaska. National Biological Service, Humboldt St. Univ., Arcata, Cal. Final Report 29-95.

# Memorandum

**TO:** Al Steininger, DOT/PF  
**DATE:** October 28, 1999  
**TELEPHONE:** 269-8661  
**FROM:** Lisa Holzapfel  
Senior Resource Manager  
**SUBJECT:** Gravina Access Project

---



The Alaska Mental Health Trust Land Office is in support of the Gravina Island Access Project. Any infrastructure development that improves access to Alaska Mental Health Trust land will be a benefit to the Trust. Improved access to Gravina Island will help to increase the value of Trust land on Gravina Island. Improved access will help to encourage development opportunities on our land, thereby resulting in increasing revenue to the Trust and the mental health beneficiaries. As you know, Alaska Mental Health Trust lands are lands granted to the State of Alaska by the federal government that are designated for the specific purpose of providing revenue to support mental health beneficiaries statewide.

More specifically, the Trust does not have a preferred bridge location alternative. Any access that improves access to Trust land is a benefit to the Trust. Key to the enhancement of Trust land is access beyond the Ketchikan airport onto Ketchikan Gateway borough lands and Trust land.

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in the planning process. Please call if you have any other questions.

Attachment(s):

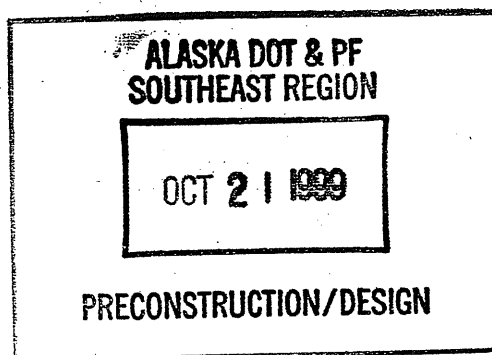
cc: Steve Planchon; file

# **KETCHIKAN GATEWAY BOROUGH**

Office of the Borough Manager • 344 Front Street • Ketchikan, Alaska 99901

Georgianna Zimmerle  
Borough Manager  
(907) 228-6625  
Fax: (907) 247-6625  
[www.ktnboro.com](http://www.ktnboro.com)

October 20, 1999



Al Steininger, P.E.  
Project Manager  
State of Alaska Department of  
Transportation and Public Facilities  
6860 Glacier Highway  
Juneau, Alaska 99801-7999

## **GRAVINA ACCESS PROJECT - AGENCY SCOPING COMMENTS**

This correspondence follows up your September 28, 1999 request for formal comments regarding the Gravina Access Project. The purpose of the project scoping phase is to identify the range of issues that need to be addressed during the project's review under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

The Borough appreciates your agency's on-going efforts to move review of this important community project forward and commends your ability to coordinate the interests and work of many different agencies. As explained in the draft statement of project purpose and need, the Borough lacks adequate land on Revillagigedo Island for commercial and industrial growth. Better access to Gravina Island will not only provide needed land for expansion and better separation of land uses, it will also provide for the community's long-term needs including economic development, transportation and shipping, recreation, and natural resource development.

To date, there have been a number of preliminary issues identified by various agencies including project effects upon air navigation, marine navigation, wetlands, fish and wildlife habitat, water body modifications, water quality, dredge and fill activities, air quality, location of new development, historic/archaeological resources, land ownerships, acquisition of right-of-way, traffic impacts, and travel distance to the airport. The Borough understands the list at this point is preliminary and that it will evolve as the project continues.

From the early stages of this project, it has been our expectation that the Gravina Access Project would be closely coordinated with comprehensive planning in the

Borough. In many instances, the preliminary impacts of the Gravina Access Project are not just project specific but are Borough-wide and therefore require broad analysis of the project's impacts to land use, traffic, wetlands, recreation, coastal resources and a host of other comprehensive planning issues. Sorting these issues out in a comprehensive fashion is important for both the defense of this important access project but also to give the Borough a chance to sort out how best to direct the growth and address the consequences community-wide development that may result from improved access to Gravina.

At this point, the Borough has identified several information needs that we think are critical to provide better coordination of the Gravina Access Project with the need for comprehensive land use planning in the community. These are described below.

An updated land use inventory for Gravina and Revillagigedo Islands will be needed. The inventory should better address:

- ◆ the purpose and need for improved access;
- ◆ assumptions regarding the need for more commercial and industrial land and the amount necessary to provide for adequate market choices;
- ◆ the need for better separation of incompatible land uses on the Revilla side as well as the potential for establishment of incompatible land uses on the Gravina side;
- ◆ where, as a result of improved access, would new industrial, commercial, and residential land uses be likely to occur.

The inventory would include present land uses for residential, industrial, institutional, transportation, and undeveloped, open lands.

Concurrent with a land use inventory, the Borough's base maps will need to be revised and updated to support both the Gravina Access Project but also the need for Borough-wide comprehensive planning that it compels. Ideally, the base maps would include:

- ◆ political boundaries;
- ◆ rivers, lakes, and shorelines;
- ◆ the roaded system;
- ◆ property lines
- ◆ topography
- ◆ major utilities
- ◆ location of structures
- ◆ land uses (based on inventory described above)
- ◆ land ownership

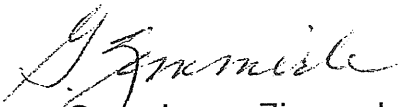
- ◆ natural resources including forests, minerals, soils, wetlands, water bodies, fish and wildlife, rock islands and sea cliffs, barrier islands and lagoons, exposed high energy coasts, and upland habitats.

A system for the digital retrieval, maintenance, and analysis of the mapped information will need to be installed in the Borough consistent with state data protocols and standards. This could include a geographic information system and/or computer aided drafting system and would include, as necessary, purchase of hardware, software, and Borough staff training.

Finally, to help support the NEPA analysis and the Borough's efforts to coordinate it with area-wide planning, a contemporary set of scalable, digital aerial photography will need to be prepared. It would be preferable for the photography to be compatible with the digital mapping system described above.

On a related topic, I would like to thank you for sponsoring the successful planning fair held on October 6th at the Civic Center. The meeting was one of the best attended and informative public meetings held here in some time. I expect that if the level of coordination and cooperation demonstrated there continues, we will be equally as successful in our endeavors to bring needed infrastructure and economic development to the Ketchikan Gateway Borough.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide our comments regarding the scoping of the preliminary issues for the Gravina Access Project.



Georgianna Zimmerle  
Borough Manager

c: Mayor and Assemblymembers  
Susan Dickinson, Planning Director  
file



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION 10  
1200 Sixth Avenue  
Seattle, WA 98101

MAY 26 1999

Reply To  
Attn Of: ECO-088

Ref:99-009-AFS

Michael L. Downing, Director  
Statewide Design and Engineering Services Division  
Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities  
3132 Channel Drive  
Juneau, Alaska 99801-7898

Dear Mr. Downing:

I am writing in response to your January 25, 1999 letter requesting that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) join the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) as a cooperating agency in developing the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the proposed Gravina Island Access project.

It is my understanding that over the past several months my staff has been in communication with Al Steining of your staff to better understand the nature of your request and the specific role and/or tasks that ADOT&PF is interested in having EPA provide as a cooperating agency. In those discussions, we have learned that it is your desire to have us participate in scoping meetings for the EIS and to review and comment on preliminary work products or drafts of the EIS. We believe that we can provide much of the early participation in project and EIS development you desire, within existing agency resource and workload constraints/commitments, without being formally designated as a cooperating agency. Consequently, we respectfully decline your invitation to be a cooperating agency for the preparation of the EIS for the Gravina Island Access project.

While we will not participate in the project as a formal cooperating agency, I am making my staff available (to the extent that agency resources allow) to work with ADOT&PF as the project and EIS are being developed; consistent with our early participation responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). In this capacity, it is our intent to provide ADOT&PF with meaningful input as the project and the EIS are being developed. Bill Ryan in our NEPA Review Team will serve as our point of contact for this project and he will coordinate EPA's participation with ADOT&PF. Bill can be reached in Seattle at (206) 633-2274.

Thank you for providing us with the opportunity to participate in early project and EIS development activities. We look forward to working with you as the project moves forward.

Sincerely,

Elbert Moore, Director  
Office of Ecosystems and Communities

cc: Jim Bryson, FHWA

U.S. Department  
of Transportation

United States  
Coast Guard



Commander  
Seventeenth Coast Guard District

P.O. Box 25517  
Juneau, Alaska 99802  
Staff Symbol: (mon)  
Phone: (907) 463-2268  
FAX: (907) 463-2273

16590  
3/26/99

Michael L. Downing, P.E.  
Director, Statewide Design & Engineering  
Services Division  
Alaska Department of Transportation  
and Public Facilities  
3132 Channel Drive  
Juneau, Alaska 99801-7898

RECEIVED

APR 01 1999

Stwd. Design & Eng. Svcs  
Director's Office

Dear Mr. Downing:

The Coast Guard accepts your invitation to participate as a Cooperating Agency in the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Ketchikan-Gravina Island Bridge project. It is my understanding that the proposal involves the spanning of Tongass Narrows to connect the City of Ketchikan with the Ketchikan International airport located on Gravina Island.

We request that the EIS contain a separate section discussing navigational impacts of your proposal. Enclosed is a listing of questions that once answered should assist you in describing present and prospective navigation of the entire waterway as well as for the reach through each of the bridge sites. The answers to the questions should also help you determine the impacts of the bridges as well as navigational impacts during construction. As I stated in a recent telephone conversation, a public hearing is highly encouraged in the very near future to solicit additional information on navigational issues by the users themselves. It is my understanding that you are in the process of hiring a consultant to handle these types of events.

The Coast Guard issued a Public Notice dated July 21, 1993 soliciting comments on the navigational clearances needed to safely accommodate existing as well as potential users of the waterway. Several cruise ship operators responded at that time that the trend in their industry indicated larger ships and that proposed bridges should be high enough to accommodate them. In addition concerns were raised by the operators of the Alaska Marine Highway system about the increased congestion in the east channel if your plans involve closing the west channel to most commercial traffic. Recent information indicates that a cruise ship with a 208' height plans to use this waterway in the very near future. Our office plans to issue another Public Notice to confirm this as well as acquire up-to-date information on the type, size, and clearances required by the various vessels that may be impacted by your proposed bridges.

I have enclosed navigational data forwarded by our Marine Safety Detachment located in Ketchikan, that may be helpful. They are part of an organization of vessel operators who recently developed operating guidelines for vessels operating on Tongass Narrows in an effort to enhance the safety of navigation on this congested waterway.

I look forward to assisting you in gathering additional information concerning impacts to navigation associated with this important project. If you have any questions, please contact me at 463-2268.

Sincerely,



J. N. HELFINSTINE  
Chief, Bridge Section, Waterways  
Management & Navigation Safety Branch  
U. S. Coast Guard  
By direction of the Commander

Enclosure: (1) Navigational Evaluation  
(2) Marine Safety Detachment Ketchikan ltr dated 03/08/99  
(3) Waterway User Guide  
(4) Tongass Narrows Voluntary Waterway Guide  
(5) General Operating Guidelines for all Vessels Operating on Tongass Narrows



REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF:

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
U.S. ARMY ENGINEER DISTRICT, ALASKA  
P.O. BOX 898  
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99506-0898

Regulatory Branch  
East Section

FEBRUARY 19 1999

RECEIVED

FEB 27 1999

Stwd. Design & Eng. Sw  
Director's Office

Michael L. Downing, P.E.  
Director  
Statewide Design & Engineering  
Services Division  
Alaska Department of Transportation  
and Public Facilities  
3132 Channel Drive  
Juneau, Alaska 99801-7898

Dear Mr. Downing:

This is in regard to your letter, dated January 25, 1999, pertaining to the proposed Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to be prepared for the Ketchikan-Gravina Island Bridge project. Your letter included an invitation to the Regulatory Branch, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Alaska District, to participate in the EIS preparation as a Cooperating Agency.

Please note that pursuant to 49 U.S.C. 1155g(6)(A), the construction of a bridge structure over navigable waters is under the authority of the U.S. Coast Guard. Also, a Department of the Army nationwide permit (NWP) has been issued pursuant to December 13, 1996, Federal Register, Final Notice of Issuance, Reissuance, and Modification of Nationwide Permits (61 FR 65874), which authorizes:

(15.) U.S. Coast Guard Approved Bridges. Discharges of dredged or fill material incidental to the construction of bridges across navigable waters of the United States, including cofferdams, abutments, foundation seals, piers, and temporary construction and access fills provided such discharges have been authorized by the U.S. Coast Guard as part of the bridge permit. Causeways and approach fills are not included in this NWP and will require an individual or regional Section 404 permit. (Section 404)

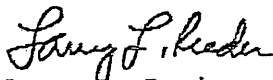
We anticipate that most bridge-related fills will be covered by one or more of the NWPs.

However, should it be determined that either a fill approach(s) and/or causeway(s) would be constructed in navigable waters of the U.S., in conjunction with the bridge project, the DA, in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act regulations and our implementing regulations (33 CFR Part 325, Appendix B), would then consent to be a Cooperating Agency.

-2-

Please do not hesitate to contact either myself or Mr. John C. Leeds, III, of my Regulatory staff at (907) 753-2720 or toll free in Alaska at (800) 478-2712, should you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Larry L. Reeder  
Chief, Regulatory Branch